# THE CONFESSIONS OF JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

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THE

# CONFESSIONS

OF JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

*Translated from the French.*

*With a preface by*

EDMUND WILSON

VOLUME II

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# THE CONFESSIONS OF JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

## VOLUME II

# PART TWO

## BOOK VIII

### [1749]

AT the end of the preceding book a pause was necessary. With this begins the long chain of my misfortunes deduced from their origin.

Having lived in the two most splendid houses in Paris, I had, notwithstanding my retiring disposition, made some acquaintances, amongst others, at Madame Dupin's, that of the young Hereditary Prince of Saxe-Gotha, and of the Baron de Thun, his tutor; at the house of M. de La Poplinière, that of Monsieur Seguy, friend of the Baron de Thun, and known in the literary world by his fine edition of Rousseau. The Baron invited Monsieur Seguy and myself to go and pass a day or two at Fontenay-sous-Bois, where the Prince had a house. We went, and as I passed Vincennes, at the sight of the donjon my feelings were acute, the effect of which the Baron perceived on my countenance. At supper the Prince mentioned the confinement of Diderot. The Baron, wishing to hear what I had to say, accused the prisoner of imprudence; and I showed not a little of the same in the impetuous manner in which I defended him. This excess of zeal, inspired by the misfortune which had befallen a friend, was pardoned, and the conversation immediately changed. There were present two Germans in the service of the Prince: Monsieur Klupffel, a man of great

intelligence, his chaplain, and who afterwards, having supplanted the Baron, became his tutor; the other was a young man named Monsieur Grimm, who served him as a reader until he could obtain some place, and whose indifferent appearance sufficiently proved the pressing necessity he was under of finding one. From this very evening Klupffel and I began an acquaintance which soon led to friendship. That with the Sieur Grimm did not make quite so rapid a progress; he made but few advances, and was far from having that presuming style which prosperity afterwards gave him. The next day at dinner, the conversation turning upon music, he spoke well on the subject. I was transported with joy when I learned that he could play an accompaniment on the harpsichord. After dinner was over, music was introduced, and we amused ourselves the rest of the afternoon on the Prince's harpsichord. Thus began that friendship which was at first so agreeable to me, afterwards so fatal, and of which I shall hereafter have so much to say.

At my return to Paris I learned the agreeable news that Diderot was released from the donjon, and that he had, on his parole, the Castle and Park of Vincennes for a prison, with permission to see his friends. How painful it was to me not to be able instantly to fly to him! But I was detained two or three days at Madame Dupin's by indispensable business. After ages of impatience, I flew to the arms of my friend. Joy inexpressible! He was not alone: D'Alembert and the treasurer of the Sainte-Chapelle were with him. As I entered I saw nobody but himself. I made but one step, one cry: I riveted my face to his: I pressed him in my arms, without speaking to him except by tears and sighs: I stifled him with my affection and joy. The first thing he did, after quitting my arms, was to turn himself towards the ecclesiastic, and say: 'You see, sir, how much I am be-

loved by my friends.' My emotion was so great that it was then impossible for me to reflect upon this manner of turning it to advantage; but, in sometimes thinking of it since, I have always been of opinion that, had I been in the place of Diderot, the idea he manifested would not have been the first to occur to me.

I found him much affected by his imprisonment. The donjon had made a terrible impression upon his mind, and, although he was very agreeably situated in the castle, and at liberty to walk where he pleased in the park, which is not enclosed even by a wall, he wanted the society of his friends to prevent him from yielding to melancholy. As I was the person most concerned for his sufferings, I imagined I should also be the friend the sight of whom would give him most consolation; on which account, notwithstanding very pressing occupations, I went every two days at furthest, either alone or accompanied by his wife, to pass the afternoon with him.

The heat of the summer was this year (1749) excessive. Vincennes is some two leagues from Paris. The state of my purse not permitting me to pay for hackney coaches, at two o'clock in the afternoon I went on foot when alone, and walked as fast as possible, that I might arrive the sooner. The trees by the side of the road, always lopped, according to the custom of the country, afforded but little shade, and, exhausted by fatigue, I frequently threw myself on the ground, being unable to proceed. I thought a book in my hand might make me moderate my pace. One day I took the *Mercure de France*, and as I walked and read I came to the following question, proposed by the Academy of Dijon for the prize of the ensuing year: 'Has the progress of sciences and arts contributed to corrupt or to purify morals?'

The moment I read this I beheld another world, and became a different man. Although I have a vivid remem-

brance of the impression it made upon me, the detail has escaped my mind, since I communicated it to Monsieur de Malesherbes in one of my four letters to him. This is one of the singularities of my memory which merits to be remarked. It serves me in proportion to my dependence upon it; the moment I have committed to paper that with which it was charged, it forsakes me, and I have no sooner written a thing than I have forgotten it entirely. This singularity is the same with respect to music. Before I had learned the use of notes I knew a great number of songs: directly I knew how to sing an air set to music, I could not recollect any one of them; and at present I much doubt whether I should be able entirely to go through one of those of which I was most fond.

All I distinctly recollect upon this occasion, is that on my arrival at Vincennes I was in an agitation which approached delirium. Diderot perceived it; I told him the cause, and read to him the prosopopœia of Fabricus, written with a pencil under an oak-tree. He encouraged me to pursue my ideas, and to become a competitor for the prize. I did so, and from that moment I was ruined. All the rest of my life and its misfortunes were the inevitable effect of this moment of error.[1]

My sentiments became elevated with the most inconceivable rapidity to the level of my ideas. All my little passions were stifled by the enthusiasm of truth, liberty, and virtue; and, what is most astonishing, this effervescence continued in my mind for upwards of five years, to as great a degree, perhaps, as it has ever done in that of any other man.

I composed the discourse in a very singular manner, one which I have generally followed in all my other works.

[1] In Rousseau's second letter to Malesherbes, and in Marmontel's *Memoirs*, Book VIII., may be found some interesting particulars respecting this incident.

I dedicated to it the hours of the night in which sleep deserted me. I meditated in my bed with closed eyes, and in my mind turned over and over again my periods with incredible labour and care. Then, being finished to my satisfaction, I deposited them in my memory, until I had an opportunity of committing them to paper; but the time of rising and putting on my clothes made me lose everything, and when I took up my pen I recollected but little of what I had composed. I resolved to make Madame Le Vasseur my secretary. I had lodged her, with her daughter and husband, nearer to myself; and she, to save me the expense of a servant, came every morning to make my fire, and to do such other little things as were necessary. As soon as she arrived, I dictated to her while in bed what I had composed in the night, and this method, which for a long time I observed, preserved to me many things that I should otherwise have forgotten.

As soon as the discourse was finished, I showed it to Diderot. He was satisfied with the production, and suggested some corrections. However, this composition, full of force and fire, absolutely wants logic and order. Of all the works I ever wrote, this is the weakest in reasoning, and the most devoid of number and harmony; but, with whatever talent a man may be born, the art of writing is not very readily learned.

I sent off this piece without mentioning it to anybody, except, I think, to Grimm, with whom after his going to live with the Comte de Frièse, I began to be upon the most intimate footing. His harpsichord served as a rendezvous, and at it I passed with him all the moments I had to spare in singing Italian airs and *barcarolles* without intermission from morning till night, or rather from night until morning; and, when I was not to be found at Madame Dupin's, everybody concluded I was with

Grimm at his apartment, in the public walk or the theatre. I left off going to the Comédie-Italienne, of which I was free, but for which he had no liking, to go with him — and pay — to the Comédie-Française, of which he was passionately fond. In short, so powerful an attraction connected me with this young man, and I became so inseparable from him, that the poor 'aunt' herself was rather neglected — that is, I saw her less frequently, though in no moment of my life has my attachment to her been diminished.

This impossibility of dividing in favour of my inclinations the little time I had to myself, renewed more strongly than ever the desire I had long entertained of having but one home for Thérèse and myself; but the embarrassment of her numerous family, and especially the want of money to purchase furniture, had hitherto withheld me from accomplishing it. An opportunity to do so presented itself, and of this I took advantage. Monsieur de Francueil and Madame Dupin, clearly perceiving that eight or nine hundred francs a year were unequal to my wants, increased my salary of their own accord to fifty louis; and, moreover, Madame Dupin having heard that I wished to furnish my lodgings, assisted me with some articles for that purpose. With this furniture and that which Thérèse already had, we made one common stock, and, having hired an apartment in the Hôtel de Languedoc, Rue de Grenelle-Saint-Honoré, kept by very honest people, we arranged ourselves in the best manner we could, and lived there peaceably and agreeably during seven years, at the end of which time I removed to the Hermitage.

Thérèse's father was a good old man, very mild in his disposition, and much afraid of his wife; for this reason he had given her the surname of Lieutenant Criminel, which Grimm jocosely transferred afterwards to the daughter.

Madame Le Vasseur did not want sense — that is, sharpness — and pretended to the politeness and airs of the first circles; but she had a mysterious wheedling manner, which to me was insupportable, gave bad advice to her daughter, endeavoured to make her dissemble with me, and cajoled my friends at my expense and at that of each other; excepting these circumstances, she was a tolerably good mother, because she found her account in being so, and concealed the faults of her daughter to turn them to her own advantage. This woman, who had so much of my care and attention, to whom I made so many little presents, and by whom I had it extremely at heart to make myself beloved, was, from the impossibility of my succeeding in this wish, the only cause of the uneasiness that I suffered in my little establishment. Except the effects of this cause, I enjoyed during these six or seven years the most perfect domestic happiness of which human weakness is capable. The heart of my Thérèse was that of an angel; our attachment increased with our intimacy, and we were daily more and more convinced how much we were made for each other. Could our pleasures be described, their simplicity would cause laughter — our walks together outside of the city, where I magnificently spent eight or ten sous in some *guinguette;* our little suppers at my window, seated opposite to each other upon two little chairs, placed upon a trunk, which filled up the space of the embrasure. In this situation the window served us as a table, we breathed the fresh air, enjoyed the prospect of the environs and the people who passed; and, although upon the fourth story, looked down into the street as we ate. Who can describe, who can feel, the charms of these repasts, consisting only of a loaf of coarse bread, a few cherries, a morsel of cheese, and a small bottle of wine which we drank between us? Friendship, confidence, intimacy, sweetness of disposition, how

delicious are your seasonings! We sometimes remained in this situation until midnight, and never thought of the hour, until informed of it by the good-woman of the house. But let us quit these details, which must seem insipid or laughable. I have always said and felt that real enjoyment was not to be described.

Much about the same time I indulged in one, a more gross enjoyment, the last of the kind with which I have to reproach myself. I have observed that the minister Klupffel was an amiable man; my connections with him were almost as intimate as those I had with Grimm, and in the end became as familiar; they sometimes ate at my apartment. These repasts, a little more than simple, were enlivened by the witty and extravagant wantonness of expression of Klupffel, and the diverting Germanicisms of Grimm, who had not yet become a purist. Sensuality did not preside at our little orgies, but merriment made up for that, and we enjoyed ourselves so well together that we knew not how to separate. Among other household goods, Klupffel had furnished himself with a little girl, who, notwithstanding this, was at the service of anybody, because he could not support her entirely himself. One evening as we were going into the café, we met him coming out with the intention of going to sup with her. We rallied him; he revenged himself gallantly, by inviting us to the same supper, and there rallying us in turn. The poor creature appeared to be of a good disposition, mild, and little fitted for the way of life in which an old hag she had with her did her best to instruct her. Wine and conversation enlivened us to such a degree that we forgot ourselves. The amiable Klupffel was unwilling to do the honours by halves, and we all three successively visited the next chamber, in company with his poor little girl, who knew not whether to laugh or cry. Grimm has always maintained that he never touched

her; it was therefore to amuse himself with our impatience that he remained so long with her, and if he abstained, there is not much probability of his having done so from scruple, because, previously to his going to live with the Comte de Friese, he had lodged with girls of the town in this same quarter of Saint-Roch.

I left the Rue des Moineaux, where this girl lived, as much ashamed as Saint-Preux when he left the house in which he had become intoxicated; and when I wrote his story I well remembered my own.[1] Thérèse perceived by some sign, and especially by my confusion, that I had something with which I reproached myself. I relieved my mind by a frank and immediate confession. I did well, for the next day Grimm came in triumph to relate to her my crime with aggravation, and since that time he never failed maliciously to recall it to her recollection. In this he was the more culpable, since I had freely and voluntarily given him my confidence, and had a right to expect he would not make me repent of it. I never had a more convincing proof than on this occasion of the goodness of my Thérèse's heart: she was more shocked at the behaviour of Grimm than offended by my infidelity, and I received nothing from her but tender reproaches, in which there was not the least appearance of any bitterness.

The simplicity of mind of this excellent girl was equal to her goodness of heart, and this is saying everything; but one instance of it, which is present to my recollection, is worthy of being related. I had told her that Klupffel was a minister,[2] and chaplain to the Prince of Saxe-Gotha. A minister was to her so singular a man that, oddly confounding the most dissimilar ideas, she took it into her head to take Klupffel for the Pope. I

[1] See *La Nouvelle Héloïse.*
[2] A Protestant clergyman.

thought her mad the first time she told me, when I came in, that the Pope had called to see me. I made her explain herself, and lost not a moment in going to relate the story to Grimm and Klupffel, to whom we thenceforth gave the appellation of Pope. We gave to the girl in the Rue des Moineaux the name of Pope Joan. Our laughter was incessant; it almost stifled us. They who in a letter which it hath pleased them to attribute to me have made me say that I never laughed but twice in my life, did not know me at this period, nor in my younger days; for, if they had, surely the idea could never have entered their heads.

[1750–1752.] The year following (1750), not thinking more of my discourse, I learned it had gained the prize at Dijon. This news awakened all the ideas which had dictated it to me, gave them new animation, and completed the fermentation in my heart of that first leaven of heroism and virtue which my father, my country, and Plutarch had inspired in my infancy. Nothing now appeared great in my eyes but to be free and virtuous, superior to fortune and opinion, and wholly sufficient to oneself. Although a false shame and a fear of disapprobation at first prevented me from conducting myself according to these principles, and from suddenly flying in the face of the maxims of the age I lived in, my decision was then taken, and I only delayed its accomplishment till opposition should assume such an irritating form that I could be sure of a triumph.

While I was thus philosophising upon the duties of man, an event happened which made me better reflect upon my own. Thérèse became pregnant for the third time. Too sincere with myself, too haughty to contradict my principles by my actions, I began to examine the destination of my children, and my connections with

the mother, according to the laws of nature, justice, and reason, and those of that religion — pure, holy, and eternal, like its Author — which men have polluted while they pretend to purify it, and which, by their formularies, they have reduced to a mere religion of words, since the difficulty of prescribing impossibilities is but trifling to those by whom they are not practised.

If I deceived myself in my conclusions, nothing can be more astonishing than the security with which I depended upon them. Were I one of those men, born deaf to the soft voice of nature, in whom no sentiment of justice or humanity ever took root, this obduracy would be natural. But that warmth of heart, quick sensibility, and facility of forming attachments; the force with which they subdue me; my cruel sufferings when obliged to break them; the innate benevolence I cherish towards my fellow-creatures; the ardent love I bear to whatever is great, true, beautiful, and just; the horror in which I hold evil of every kind; the impossibility of hating, of injuring, or wishing to injure, any one; the soft and lively emotion I feel at the sight of whatever is virtuous, generous, and amiable — can these meet in the same mind with the depravity which without scruple treads underfoot the most pleasing of all our duties? No; I feel and openly declare this to be impossible. Never in his whole life could Jean-Jacques be a man without sentiment, without compassion, an unnatural father. I may have been deceived, but never hardened myself. Were I to give my reasons I should say too much; since they have seduced me, they would seduce many others. I will not, therefore, expose those young persons by whom I may be read to the same danger. I will satisfy myself by observing that my error was such, that, in abandoning my children to public education for want of the means of bringing

them up myself; in destining them to become workmen and peasants, rather than adventurers and fortune-hunters, I thought I was acting the part of a citizen and father, and considered myself as a member of the republic of Plato. Since that time the regrets of my heart have more than once told me I was deceived; but my reason was so far from giving me the same intimation, that I have frequently returned thanks to Heaven for having, by this means, preserved them from the fate of their father, and that by which they were threatened the moment I should have been under the necessity of leaving them. Had I left them to Madame d'Épinay or Madame de Luxembourg, who, from friendship, generosity, or some other motive, offered to take care of them in due time, would they have been more happy, better brought up, or honester men? To this I cannot answer, but I am certain they would have been taught to hate and, perhaps, betray their parents: it is much better that they have never known them.

My third child was, therefore, carried to the Enfants-Trouvés as well as the two former, and the next two were disposed of in the same manner; for I have had five children in all. This arrangement seemed to me so good, reasonable, and lawful, that if I did not publicly boast of it, the motive by which I was withheld was merely my regard for their mother; but I mentioned it to all those to whom I had declared our connection — to Diderot, to Grimm, afterwards to Madame d'Épinay, and, after another interval, to Madame de Luxembourg; and this freely and voluntarily, without being under the least necessity of doing it, having it in my power to conceal the step from all the world, for La Gouin was an honest woman, very discreet, and a person on whom I had the greatest reliance. The only one of my friends to whom it was in some measure my interest to reveal the matter,

was Thierry the physician, who had the care of my poor 'aunt' in one of her lyings-in, in which she was very ill. In a word, there was no mystery in my conduct, not only on account of my never having concealed anything from my friends, but because I never perceived any harm in it. Everything considered, I chose the best destination for my children, or that which I thought to be such. I should have wished, and still should wish, to have been brought up as they have been.

Whilst I was thus communicating what I had done, Madame Le Vasseur did the same thing amongst her acquaintance, but with less disinterested views. I had introduced her and her daughter to Madame Dupin, who, from friendship to me, showed them the greatest kindness. The mother confided to her the secret of the daughter. Madame Dupin, who is generous and kind, and to whom she never told how attentive I was to her, notwithstanding my moderate resources, in providing for everything, provided on her part for what was necessary, with a liberality which, by order of her mother, the daughter concealed from me during my residence at Paris, nor ever mentioned it until we were at the Hermitage, when she informed me of it, after having disclosed to me several other secrets of her heart. I knew not that Madame Dupin, who never took the least notice to me of the matter, was so well informed. I know not yet whether Madame de Chenonceaux, her daughter-in-law, was as much in the secret; but Madame de Francueil, her stepdaughter, knew the whole and could not refrain from prattling. She spoke of it to me the following year, after I had left their house. This induced me to write her a letter upon the subject, which will be found in my collections, and wherein I gave such of my reasons as I could make public, without exposing Madame Le Vasseur and her family; the most determining reasons

came from that quarter, and these I kept profoundly secret.

I can rely upon the discretion of Madame Dupin, and the friendship of Madame de Chenonceaux; I had the same dependence upon that of Madame de Francueil, who, however, was long dead before my secret made its way into the world. This it could never have done except by means of the persons to whom I intrusted it, nor did it until after my rupture with them. By this single fact they are judged; without exculpating myself from the blame I deserve, I prefer it to that which is due to their malignity. My fault is great, but it was an error. I have neglected my duty, but the desire of doing an injury never entered my heart; and the feelings of a father were never more eloquent in favour of children whom he never saw. But betraying the confidence of friendship, violating the most sacred of all engagements, publishing secrets confided to us, and wantonly dishonouring the friend we have deceived, and who in detaching himself from our society still respects us, are not faults, but baseness of mind and stains upon reputation.

I have promised my confession and not my justification, on which account I shall stop here. It is my duty to relate the truth, that of the reader to be just; more than this I never shall require of him.

The marriage of Monsieur de Chenonceaux rendered his mother's house still more agreeable to me, by the wit and merit of the new bride, a very amiable young person, who seemed to distinguish me amongst the scribes of Monsieur Dupin. She was the only daughter of Madame la Vicomtesse de Rochechouart, a great friend of the Comte de Frièse, and consequently of Grimm, who was very attentive to her. However, it was I who introduced him to the daughter; but their characters not suiting each other, this connection was not of long duration; and Grimm,

who from that time aimed at what was solid, preferred the mother, a woman of the world, to the daughter, who wished for steady friends, such as were agreeable to her without troubling her head about the least intrigue, or making any interest amongst the great. Madame Dupin, no longer finding in Madame de Chenonceaux all the docility she expected, made her house very disagreeable to her, and Madame de Chenonceaux, having a great opinion of her own merit, and perhaps of her birth, chose rather to give up the pleasures of society, and remain almost alone in her apartment, than to submit to a yoke she was not disposed to bear. This species of exile increased my attachment to her, by that natural inclination which excites me to approach the wretched. I found her mind metaphysical and reflective, although at times a little sophistical. Her conversation, which was by no means that of a young woman coming from a convent, had for me the greatest attraction; yet she was not twenty years of age. Her skin was of a dazzling whiteness; her figure would have been majestic had she held herself more upright; her hair, which was fair, bordering upon ash-colour, and uncommonly beautiful, called to my recollection that of poor Mamma, in the flower of her age, and strongly agitated my heart. But the severe principles I had just laid down for myself, by which at all events I was determined to be guided, secured me from the danger of her and her charms. During a whole summer I passed three or four hours every day with her, without any third person, seriously teaching her arithmetic, and fatiguing her with my innumerable figures and sums, without uttering a single word of gallantry, or even once glancing my eyes upon her. Five or six years later I should not have had so much wisdom or folly; but it was decreed that I was never to experience true love but once in my life, and that

another person was to have the first and last sighs of my heart.

Since I had lived in the house of Madame Dupin, I had always been satisfied with my situation, without showing the least sign of a desire to improve it. The addition which, in conjunction with Monsieur de Francueil, she had made to my salary, was entirely of their own accord. This year Monsieur de Francueil, whose friendship for me daily increased, had it in his thoughts to place me more at ease, and in a less precarious situation. He was Receiver-General of Finance. Monsieur Dudoyer, his cashier, was old and rich, and wished to retire. Monsieur de Francueil offered me this place, and to prepare myself for it I went during a few weeks to Monsieur Dudoyer, to take the necessary instructions. But, whether my talents were ill suited to the employment, or that Dudoyer, who I thought wished to procure his place for another, was not in earnest in the instructions he gave me, I acquired slowly and imperfectly the knowledge I needed, and could never understand the nature of accounts like these, purposely rendered intricate. However, without having possessed myself of the whole scope of the business, I learned enough of the method to pursue it without the least difficulty. I even entered on my new office. I kept the cash books and the cash; I paid and received money, took and gave receipts; and, although this business was as ill suited to my inclinations as to my abilities, maturity of years beginning to render me sedate, I was determined to conquer my disgust, and entirely devote myself to my new employment. Unfortunately, I had no sooner begun to proceed without difficulty than Monsieur de Francueil took a little journey, during which I remained intrusted with the cash, which, however, did not then amount to more than twenty-five or thirty thousand francs. The anxiety of mind this

sum of money occasioned me made me perceive I was very unfit to be a cashier, and I have no doubt my uneasy situation, during his absence, contributed to the illness with which I was seized after his return.

I have observed in my First Part that I was born in a dying state. A defect in the bladder caused me during my early years to suffer an almost continual retention of urine, and my aunt Suzon, to whose care I was intrusted, had inconceivable difficulty in preserving me. However, she succeeded, and my robust constitution at length got the better of all my weakness, and my health became so well established that, except the illness from languor, of which I have given an account, and frequent heats in the bladder, which the least heating of the blood rendered troublesome, I arrived at the age of thirty almost without feeling my original infirmity. The first time this recurred was upon my arrival at Venice. The fatigue of the voyage, and the extreme heat I had suffered, renewed the irritation, and gave me pains in the loins, which continued until the beginning of the winter. After having seen the *padoana*, I thought the end was come, but I suffered not the least inconvenience. After exhausting my imagination more than my body for my Zulietta, I enjoyed better health than ever. It was not until after the imprisonment of Diderot that the internal inflammation brought on by my journeys to Vincennes during the terrible heat of that summer gave me a violent attack of nephritis, since which time I have never recovered my primitive state of health.

At the period of which I speak, having, perhaps, fatigued myself too much in the unhealthy work of this accursed cash-office, I fell into a worse state than ever, and remained for five or six weeks in my bed in the most melancholy state imaginable. Madame Dupin sent to me the celebrated Morand, who, notwithstanding his

address and the delicacy of his touch, made me suffer the greatest torments, and could never give me relief. He advised me to have recourse to Daran, whose appliances were better constructed, and reached the seat of the disorder. But Morand, when he gave Madame Dupin an account of my condition, declared to her that I should not be alive in six months. This afterwards came to my ear, and made me reflect seriously on my situation, and the folly of sacrificing the agreeable repose of the few days I had to live to the slavery of an employment for which I felt nothing but disgust. Besides, how was it possible to reconcile the severe principles I had just adopted to a situation with which they had so little relation? Should not I, the cashier of a Receiver-General of Finances, have preached poverty and disinterestedness with a very ill grace? These ideas fermented so powerfully in my mind with the fever, and were so strongly impressed, that from that time nothing could remove them; and, during my convalescence, I confirmed myself with coolness in the resolutions I had taken during my delirium. I for ever abandoned all projects of fortune and advancement. Resolved to pass in independence and poverty the little time I had to exist, I made every effort of which my mind was capable to break the fetters of prejudice, and courageously to do everything that was right without giving myself the least concern about the judgment of mankind. The obstacles I had to combat, and the efforts I made to triumph over them, are inconceivable. I succeeded as well as it was possible, and to a greater degree than I myself had hoped for. Had I at the same time shaken off the yoke of friendship as well as that of prejudice, my design would have been accomplished — perhaps the greatest, at least the most useful one to virtue, that mortal ever conceived; but, whilst I despised the foolish judgments of the vulgar tribe who call themselves

great and wise, I suffered myself to be influenced and led by self-styled friends, who, hurt at seeing me walk alone in a new path, while seeming to take measures for my happiness, used all their endeavours to render me ridiculous, and, that they might afterwards defame me, first strove to make me contemptible. It was less my literary fame than my personal reformation, of which I here state the period, that drew upon me their jealousy. They perhaps might have pardoned me for having distinguished myself in literature; but they could never forgive my setting them, by my conduct, an example which seemed to reflect on themselves. I was born for friendship; my mind and easy disposition nourished it without difficulty. As long as I lived unknown to the public I was beloved by all my private acquaintance, and I had not a single enemy; but the moment I acquired literary fame I had no longer a friend. This was a great misfortune; a still greater was that of being surrounded by people who called themselves my friends, and used the rights attached thereto to lead me on to destruction. The succeeding part of these memoirs will explain this odious conspiracy: I here speak of its origin, and the manner of the first intrigue will shortly appear.

In the independence in which I desired to live, it was, however, necessary to subsist. To this effect I thought of very simple means, namely, copying music at so much a page. If any employment more solid would have fulfilled the same end I would have taken it up; but this occupation being to my taste, and the only one which, without personal attendance, could procure me daily bread, I adopted it. Thinking I had no longer need of foresight, and stifling vanity, from having been a cashier of Finance I made myself a copyist of music. I thought I had made an advantageous choice, and of this I have so little repented that I have never quitted my new pro-

fession until I was forced to do so, after taking a fixed resolution to return to it as soon as possible.

The success of my first discourse rendered the execution of this resolution more easy. As soon as it had gained the prize, Diderot undertook to get it printed. Whilst I was in my bed, he wrote me a note informing me of the publication and effect. 'It takes,' said he, 'beyond all imagination; never was there an instance of a like success.' This favour of the public, by no means solicited, and towards an unknown author, gave me the first real assurance of my talents, of which, notwithstanding an inward feeling, I had always had my doubts. I conceived the great advantage to be drawn from it in favour of the course I had determined to pursue, and was of opinion that a copyist who had also some celebrity in the republic of letters was not likely to want employment.

The moment my resolution was fully confirmed, I wrote a note to Monsieur de Francueil, communicating to him my intentions, thanking him and Madame Dupin for all their kindness, and offering my services in the way of my new profession. Francueil did not understand my note, and, thinking I was still in the delirium of fever, hastened to my apartment; but he found me so determined that all he could say was without the least effect. He went to Madame Dupin, and told her and everybody he met that I had become insane. I let him say what he pleased, and pursued my own plan. I began by changing my dress; I quitted laced clothes and white stockings; I put on a round wig, laid aside my sword, and sold my watch, saying to myself, with inexpressible pleasure, 'Thank Heaven! I shall no longer want to know the hour!' Monsieur de Francueil had the goodness to wait a considerable time before he disposed of my place. At length, perceiving me inflexibly resolved, he gave it to Monsieur d'Alibard, formerly tutor to the young

Chenonceaux, and known as a botanist by his *Flora Parisiensis*.[1]

However austere my sumptuary reform might be, I did not at first extend it to my linen, which was fine and in great quantity, the remainder of my stock when at Venice, and to which I was particularly attached. By long considering it as essential to cleanliness, it had become dear to me as a luxury, and a costly one. Some person, however, was good enough to deliver me from this servitude. On Christmas Eve, whilst the *gouverneuses* were at vespers, and I was at the sacred concert, the door of a garret, in which all our linen was hung up after being washed, was broken open. Everything was stolen, and, amongst other things, forty-two of my shirts, of very fine linen, and which were the principal part of my stock. By the manner in which the neighbours described a man whom they had seen come out of the hotel with several parcels whilst we were all absent, Thérèse and I suspected her brother, whom we knew to be a worthless fellow. The mother strongly endeavoured to remove this suspicion, but so many circumstances concurred to prove it to be well founded, that, notwithstanding all she could say, our opinions remained still the same. I dared not make a strict search for fear of finding more than I wished to do. The brother never returned to the place where I lived, and at length was no more heard of by any of us. I was much grieved that Thérèse and myself should be connected with such a family, and I exhorted her more than ever to shake off so dangerous a yoke. This adventure cured me of my inclination for fine linen, and since that time all I have had has been

[1] I doubt not but these circumstances are now differently related by M. Francueil and his consorts; but I appeal to what he said of them at the time, and long afterwards, to everybody he knew, until the forming of the conspiracy, and of this men of common-sense and honour must have preserved a remembrance. — R.

very common, and more suitable to the rest of my dress.

Having thus completed my reformation, all my cares tended to render it solid and lasting, by striving to root out from my heart everything susceptible of receiving an impression from the judgment of men, or which, from the fear of blame, might turn me aside from anything good and reasonable in itself. In consequence of the success of my work, my resolution made some noise in the world also, and procured me employment, so that I began my new profession with great appearance of success. However, several causes prevented me from succeeding in it to the same degree as under other circumstances might have been the case. In the first place my ill state of health. The attack I had just had brought on consequences which prevented my ever being so well as I was before; and I am of opinion that the physicians to whose care I intrusted myself did me as much harm as my illness. I was successively under the hands of Morand, Daran, Helvétius, Malouin, and Thierry — men able in their profession, and all of them my friends, who treated me each according to his own manner, without giving me the least relief, and weakened me considerably. The more I submitted to their direction, the yellower, thinner, and weaker I became. My imagination, which they terrified, judging of my situation by the effect of their drugs, presented to me, on this side of the tomb, nothing but continued sufferings from the gravel, stone, and retention of urine. Everything which gave relief to others, *tisanes*, baths, and bleeding, increased my tortures. Perceiving the bougies of Daran, the only ones that had any favourable effect, and without which I thought I could no longer exist, to give me a momentary relief, I procured, at great expense, a prodigious number of them, that, in case of Daran's death, I

might never be at a loss. During the eight or ten years in which I made such frequent use of these, they must, with what remain to me, have cost me fifty louis. It will easily be judged that such an expensive and painful treatment did not permit me to work without interruption, and that a dying man does not bring much ardour to the business by which he gains his daily bread.

Literary occupations caused another interruption not less prejudicial to my daily employment. My discourse had no sooner appeared than the defenders of letters fell upon me as if by preconcerted arrangement. My indignation was so raised at seeing so many little copies of Monsieur Josse, [1] who did not understand the question, attempt to decide upon it magisterially, that in my answer I gave some of them the worst of it. One Monsieur Gautier, of Nancy, the first who fell under my pen, was very roughly treated in a letter to Monsieur Grimm. The second was King Stanislaus himself, who did not disdain to enter the lists with me. The honour he did me obliged me to change my manner in combating his opinions. I made use of a graver style, but not less nervous, and, without failing in respect to the author, I completely refuted his work. I knew that a Jesuit called Père Menou had been concerned in it. I depended on my judgment to distinguish what was written by the Prince from the portions supplied by the monk, and, falling without mercy upon all the Jesuitical phrases, I remarked, as I went along, an anachronism which I thought could come from nobody but the priest. This composition — which, for what reason I know not, has been less spoken of than any of my other writings — is so far the only one of its kind. I seized the opportunity which offered of showing to the public in what way an individual may defend the cause of truth even against a

[1] See Molière's *L'Amour Médecin*, i. 1.

sovereign. It is difficult to adopt a more dignified and respectful manner than that in which I answered him. I had the happiness to have to do with an adversary to whom, without adulation, I could show every mark of the esteem with which my heart was full; and this I did with success and a proper dignity. My friends, concerned for my safety, imagined they already saw me in the Bastille. This apprehension never once entered my head, and I was right in not being afraid. The good Prince, after reading my answer, said: 'I have had enough of it; I will not return to the charge.' I have since that time received from him different marks of esteem and benevolence, of some of which I shall have occasion to speak; and what I had written was read in France, and throughout Europe, without meeting the least censure.

In a little time I had another adversary whom I had not expected; this was the same Monsieur Bordes, of Lyons, who ten years before had shown me much friendship, and from whom I had received several services. I had not forgotten him, but had neglected him from idleness, and had not sent him my writings for want of a ready opportunity to get them conveyed to his hands. I was therefore in the wrong, and he attacked me; this, however, he did politely, and I answered in the same manner. He replied more decidedly. This produced my last answer, after which I heard no more from him; but he became my most violent enemy, took advantage of the time of my misfortunes to publish against me the most indecent libels, and made a journey to London on purpose to do me an injury.

All this controversy employed me a good deal, and caused me a great loss of time in my copying, without much contributing to the progress of truth, or the good of my purse. Pissot, at that time my bookseller, gave me but little for my pamphlets, frequently nothing at

all; for example, I never received a farthing for my first discourse — Diderot handed it to him as a gift. I was obliged to wait a long time for the little he gave me, and to take it from him sou by sou. Notwithstanding this, my copying went on but slowly. I had two things together upon my hands, which was the most likely means of doing them both ill.

They were very opposite to each other in their effects by the different manners of living to which they rendered me subject. The success of my first writings had given me celebrity. My new situation excited curiosity. Everybody wished to know that whimsical man who sought not the acquaintance of any one, and whose only desire was to live free and happy in the manner he had chosen; this was sufficient to make the thing impossible to me. My apartment was continually full of people, who, under different pretences, came to take up my time. The women employed a thousand artifices to engage me to dinner. The more unpolite I was with people, the more obstinate they became. I could not refuse everybody. While I made myself a thousand enemies by my refusals, I was incessantly a slave to my complaisance, and, in whatever manner I made my plans, I had not an hour in a day to myself.

I then perceived it was not so easy to be poor and independent as I had imagined. I wished to live by my profession: the public would not suffer me to do it. A thousand means were thought of to indemnify me for the time I lost. The next thing would have been showing myself, like Polichinelle, at so much a head. I know no dependence more cruel and degrading than this. I saw no other method of putting an end to it than refusing all kinds of presents, great and small, let them come from whom they would. This had no other effect than to increase the number of givers, who wished to have the honour of overcoming my resistance, and to force me, in

spite of myself, to be under an obligation to them. Many, who would not have given me an écu had I asked it of them, incessantly importuned me with their offers, and, in revenge for my refusal, taxed me with arrogance and ostentation.

It will naturally be conceived that the resolution I had taken, and the system I wished to follow, were not agreeable to Madame Le Vasseur. All the disinterestedness of the daughter did not prevent her from following the directions of her mother; and the *gouverneuses*, as Gauffecourt called them, were not always so steady in their refusals as I was. Although many things were concealed from me, I perceived enough to enable me to judge that I did not see all, and this tormented me less by the accusation of connivance, which it was so easy for me to foresee, than by the cruel idea of never being master in my own apartments, nor even of my own person. I prayed, conjured, and became angry, all to no purpose; the mother made me pass for an eternal grumbler, rude and capricious; she was continually whispering to my friends — everything in my household was mysterious and a secret to me; and, that I might not incessantly expose myself to noisy quarrelling, I no longer dared to take notice of what passed in it. A firmness of which I was not capable would have been necessary to withdraw me from this domestic strife. I knew how to complain, but not how to act; they suffered me to say what I pleased, and continued to act as they thought proper.

This constant teasing, and the daily importunities to which I was subjected, at length rendered the house, and my residence at Paris, disagreeable to me. When my indisposition permitted me to go out, and I did not suffer myself to be led hither and thither by my acquaintances, I took a walk alone, and reflected on my grand system, something of which I committed to paper, in a blank

note-book, which, with a pencil, I always had in my pocket. Thus, in order to divert my mind from the unforeseen discomforts of a condition which I had myself chosen, I became wholly devoted to literature, and consequently, in the first works I wrote, I introduced the peevishness and ill-humour which were the cause of my undertaking them.

There was another circumstance which contributed not a little to this: thrown into the world in despite of myself, without having its manners, or being in a situation to adopt and conform myself to them, I took it into my head to adopt others of my own, to enable me to dispense with those of society. My foolish timidity, which I could not conquer, having for principle the fear of being wanting in the common forms, I took, by way of encouraging myself, a resolution to tread them underfoot. I became sour and a cynic from shame, and affected to despise the politeness which I knew not how to practise. This austerity, conformable to my new principles, I must confess, seemed to ennoble itself in my mind; it assumed in my eyes the form of the intrepidity of virtue, and I dare assert it to be upon this noble basis that it supported itself longer and better than could have been expected from anything so contrary to my nature. Yet, notwithstanding I had the name of a misanthrope, which my exterior appearance and some happy expressions had given me in the world, it is certain that I never supported the character well in private; that my friends and acquaintance led this intractable bear about like a lamb; and that, confining my sarcasms to severe but general truths, I was never capable of saying an uncivil thing to any person whatsoever.

*Le Devin du Village* brought me completely into vogue, and presently after there was not a man in Paris whose company was more sought after than mine. The history

of this piece, which is a kind of era in my life, is joined with that of the connections I had at that time. I must enter a little into particulars to make what is to follow the better understood.

I had a numerous acquaintance, yet no more than two friends, Diderot and Grimm. By an effect of the desire I have ever felt to unite everything that is dear to me, I was too much a friend to both not to make them shortly become so to each other. I connected them; they agreed well together, and shortly became more intimate with each other than with me. Diderot had a numerous acquaintance, but Grimm, a stranger and a new-comer, had his to procure, and with the greatest pleasure I procured him all I could. I had already given him Diderot; I afterwards brought him acquainted with Gauffecourt. I introduced him to Madame de Chenonceaux, Madame d'Épinay, and the Baron d'Holbach: with the latter I had become connected almost in spite of myself. All my friends became his — this was natural; but not one of his ever became mine, which was inclining to the contrary. Whilst he yet lodged at the house of the Comte de Friese, he frequently gave us dinners in his apartment, but I never received the least mark of friendship from the Comte de Friese, the Comte de Schomberg, his relation — very familiar with Grimm — nor from any other person, man or woman, with whom Grimm, by their means, had any connection. I except the Abbé Raynal, who, although his friend, gave proofs of his being mine; and, in cases of need, offered me his purse with a generosity not very common. But I knew the Abbé Raynal long before Grimm had any acquaintance with him, and had entertained a great regard for him on account of his delicate and honourable behaviour to me upon a slight occasion, which I shall never forget.

The Abbé Raynal is certainly a warm friend: of this I

saw a proof, much about the time of which I speak, with respect to Grimm himself, with whom he was very intimate. Grimm, after having been some time on a footing of friendship with Mademoiselle Fel, all at once fell violently in love with her, and wished to supplant Cahusac. The young lady, piquing herself on her constancy, refused her new admirer. He was thereupon seized with a kind of tragic grief, and made up his mind to die. He suddenly fell into the strangest state imaginable. He passed days and nights in a continued lethargy. He lay with his eyes open, and, although his pulse continued to beat regularly, without speaking, eating, or stirring; sometimes seeming to hear what was said to him, but never answering, not even by a sign, and remaining almost as immovable as if he had been dead, yet without agitation, pain, or fever. The Abbé Raynal and myself watched over him; the Abbé — more robust and in better health than I was — by night, and I by day, without both being ever absent at one time. The Comte de Frièse was alarmed, and brought to him Senac, who, after having examined the state in which he was, said there was nothing to apprehend, and did not prescribe. My fears for my friend made me carefully observe the countenance of the physician, and I perceived him smile as he went away. However, the patient remained several days almost motionless, without taking broth, or anything except a few preserved cherries, which from time to time I put upon his tongue, and which he swallowed without difficulty. He one morning rose, dressed himself, and returned to his usual way of life, without either at that time, or afterwards, speaking to me or the Abbé Raynal — at least, that I know of — or to any other person of this singular lethargy, or of the care we had taken of him during the time it lasted.

The affair did not fail to make a noise, and it would

really have been a wonderful circumstance had the cruelty of an opera-singer made a man die of despair. This fine display of passion brought Grimm into vogue; he was soon considered as a prodigy in love, friendship, and attachments of every kind. Such an opinion made his company sought after, and procured him a good reception in the first circles; by which means he separated from me, with whom he never cared to associate when he could meet with anybody else. I perceived him to be on the point of breaking with me entirely; I was deeply grieved, for the lively and ardent sentiments of which he made a parade were those which, with less noise and pretension, I had really conceived for him. I was glad of his success in the world; but I did not wish him to obtain this by forgetting his friend. I one day said to him, 'Grimm, you neglect me, and I forgive you for it. When the first intoxication of your success is over, and you begin to perceive its emptiness, I hope you will return to your friend, whom you will always find the same. At present, do not constrain yourself; I leave you at liberty to act as you please, and wait your leisure.' He said I was right, made his arrangements in consequence, and shook off all restraint, so that I saw no more of him except in company with our common friends.

Our chief rendezvous, before he was so closely connected with Madame d'Épinay as he afterwards became, was at the house of Baron d'Holbach. This said Baron was the son of a man who had raised himself from obscurity. His fortune was considerable, and he used it nobly, receiving at his house men of letters and merit; and, by the knowledge he himself had acquired, was very worthy of holding a place amongst them. Having been long attached to Diderot, he endeavoured to become acquainted with me by his means, even before my name was known to the world. A natural repugnancy prevented

me for a long time from responding to his advances. One day, when he asked me the reason of my unwillingness, I told him he was too rich. He was however resolved to carry his point, and at length succeeded. My greatest misfortune has always proceeded from my being unable to resist the force of marked attention, and I have ever had reason to repent of having yielded to it.

Another acquaintance which, as soon as I had any pretensions to it, was converted into friendship, was that of Monsieur Duclos. I had several years before seen him, for the first time, at La Chevrette, where Madame d'Épinay lived, with whom he was upon very good terms. On that day we only dined together, and he returned to town in the afternoon; but we had a conversation of a few moments after dinner. Madame d'Épinay had mentioned me to him, and my opera of *Les Muses Galantes*. Duclos, endowed with too great talents not to be a friend to those in whom the like were found, was prepossessed in my favour, and invited me to go and see him. Notwithstanding my former wish, increased by an acquaintance, I was withheld by my timidity, and indolence, as long as I had no other passport to him than his complaisance; but encouraged by my first success, and by his eulogy, which reached my ears, I went to see him. He returned my visit, and thus began the connection between us which will ever render him dear to me. By him, as well as from the testimony of my own heart, I learned that uprightness and probity may sometimes be allied with the cultivation of letters.

Many other connections less solid, and which I shall not here particularise, were the effects of my first success, and lasted until curiosity was satisfied. I was a man so easily known, that on the next day nothing new was to be discovered in me. However, one woman who at that time was desirous of my acquaintance became much

more firmly attached to me than all the rest: this was Madame la Marquise de Créqui, niece to Monsieur le Bailli de Froulay, ambassador from Malta, whose brother had preceded Monsieur de Montaigu in the embassy to Venice, and whom I had gone to see on my return from that city. Madame de Créqui wrote to me. I visited her; she received me into her friendship. I sometimes dined with her. I met at her table several men of letters, amongst others Monsieur Saurin, the author of *Spartacus*, *Barneveldt*, etc., since become my implacable enemy, for no other reason, at least that I can imagine, than my bearing the name of a man whom his father has cruelly persecuted.

It will appear that for a copyist, who ought to be employed in his business from morning to night, I had many interruptions, which rendered my daily labour not very lucrative, and prevented me from being sufficiently attentive to what I did to do it well; for which reason, half the time I had to myself was lost in erasing errors or beginning my sheet anew. This importunity rendered Paris daily more insupportable, and made me ardently wish to be in the country. I several times went to pass a few days at Marcoussis, the vicar of which was known to Madame Le Vasseur, and with whom we all arranged ourselves in such a manner as not to make things disagreeable to him. Grimm once went thither with us.[1] The vicar had a tolerable voice, sang well, and, although he did not read music, learned his part with great facility and precision. We passed our time in singing my Chenonceaux trios. To these I added two or three new ones, to

[1] Since I have neglected to relate here a trifling but memorable adventure I had there with the said Grimm one day, on which we were to dine at the Fontaine de Saint-Vandrille, I will let it pass; but when I thought of it afterwards, I concluded that he was then brooding in his heart the conspiracy which he has, with so much success, since carried into execution. — R.

the words which Grimm and the vicar wrote, well or ill. I cannot refrain from regretting these trios, composed and sung in moments of pure joy, and which I left at Wootton, with all my music. Mademoiselle Davenport has perhaps already turned them into curl-papers; but they are worthy of being preserved, and are, for the most part, of very good counterpoint. It was after one of these little excursions, in which I had the pleasure of seeing the 'aunt' at her ease and very cheerful, and in which my spirits were much enlivened, that I wrote to the vicar, very rapidly and very ill, an epistle in verse, which will be found amongst my papers.

I had nearer to Paris another station much to my liking with Monsieur Mussard, my countryman, relation, and friend, who at Passy had made himself a charming retreat, where I have passed some very peaceful moments. Monsieur Mussard was a jeweller, a man of good sense, who, after having acquired a fair fortune, had given his only daughter in marriage to Monsieur de Valmalette, the son of an exchange broker, and maître d'hôtel to the King, and took the wise precaution to quit business in his declining years, and to place an interval of repose and enjoyment between the bustle and the end of life. The good man Mussard, a real philosopher in practice, lived without care, in a very pleasant house which he himself had built in a very pretty garden, laid out with his own hands. In digging the terraces of this garden he found fossil shells, and in such great quantities that his lively imagination saw nothing but shells in nature. He really thought the universe was composed of shells, or their broken fragments, and that the whole earth was only the sand of these. His attention being constantly engaged with this object and with his singular discoveries, his imagination became so heated with the ideas they gave him, that, in his head, they would soon have been con-

verted into a system — that is, into a craze — if, happily for his reason, but unfortunately for his friends, to whom he was dear, and to whom his house was an agreeable asylum, a most cruel and extraordinary disease had not put an end to his existence. A constantly increasing tumour in his stomach prevented him from eating, long before the cause of it was discovered, and after several years of suffering absolutely occasioned him to die of hunger. I can never without the greatest affliction of mind call to my recollection the last moments of this worthy man, who still received with so much pleasure Lenieps and myself, the only friends whom the sight of his sufferings did not separate from him until his last hour, when he was reduced to devouring with his eyes the repasts he had placed before us, scarcely having the power of swallowing a few drops of weak tea, which came up again a moment afterwards. But before these days of sorrow, how many have I passed at his house with the chosen friends he had made himself! At the head of the list I place the Abbé Prévost, a very amiable man and very sincere, whose heart vivified his writings, worthy of immortality, and who, neither in his disposition nor in society, had aught of the melancholy colouring he gave to his works; Procope the physician, a little Æsop, a favourite with the ladies; Boulanger, the celebrated posthumous author of *Le Despotisme Oriental*, and who, I am of opinion, extended the systems of Mussard on the duration of the world. The female part of his friends consisted of Madame Denis, niece to Voltaire, who at that time was nothing more than a good kind of woman, and pretended not to wit; Madame Vanloo, certainly not handsome, but charming, and who sang like an angel; Madame de Valmalette herself, who sang also, and who, although very thin, would have been very attractive had she had fewer pretensions. Such, or very nearly such,

was the society of Monsieur Mussard, with which I should have been much pleased, had not his *conchyliomania* more engaged my attention; and I can say, with great truth, that for upwards of six months I worked with him in his cabinet with as much pleasure as he felt himself.

He had long insisted upon the virtues of the waters of Passy, as being proper in my case, and recommended me to come to his house to drink them. To withdraw myself from the tumult of the city, I at length consented, and went to pass eight or ten days at Passy, which on account of my being in the country were of more service to me than the waters I drank during my stay there. Mussard played the violoncello, and was passionately fond of Italian music. This was the subject of a long conversation we had one evening after supper, particularly the *opere buffe* we had both seen in Italy, and with which we were highly delighted. My sleep having forsaken me in the night, I considered in what manner it would be possible to give in France an idea of this kind of drama, for *Les Amours de Ragonde* [1] did not in the least resemble it. In the morning, whilst I took my walk and drank the waters, I hastily put together a few couplets to which I adapted such airs as occurred to me at the moment. I scribbled over what I had composed in a kind of vaulted saloon at the end of the garden; and at tea I could not refrain from showing the airs to Mussard and to Mademoiselle Duvernois, his housekeeper, who was a very good and amiable girl. The three pieces of composition which I had sketched out were the first monologue, 'J'ai perdu mon serviteur'; the air of the Devin, 'L'amour croît s'il s'inquiète'; and the last duo, 'A jamais, Colin, je t'engage,' etc. I was so far from thinking it worth while

[1] A musical comedy, by Néricault Destouches, the music composed by Mouret. It was produced in 1742.

to continue what I had begun, that had it not been for the applause and encouragement I received from both, I should have thrown my papers into the fire and thought no more of their contents, as I had frequently done by things of much the same merit; but I was so excited by praise, that in six days my drama, excepting a few couplets, was written. The music also was so far sketched out that all I had further to do to it after my return from Paris was to compose a little of the recitative, and to add the middle parts, the whole of which I finished with so much rapidity that in three weeks my work was ready for representation. The only thing now wanting was the divertissement, which was not composed until a long time afterwards.

[1752.] My imagination was so warmed by the composition of this work, that I had the strongest desire to hear it performed, and would have given anything to have seen and heard the whole in the manner I should have chosen, with closed doors, as Lully is said to have had *Armide* performed for himself only. As it was not possible for me to have this pleasure unaccompanied by the public, I could not see the effect of my piece without getting it received at the Opéra. Unfortunately it was quite a new species of composition, to which the ears of the public were not accustomed; and, besides, the ill success of *Les Muses Galantes* gave me too much reason to fear for *Le Devin*, if I presented it in my own name. Duclos relieved me from this difficulty, and engaged to get the piece rehearsed without mentioning the author. That I might not discover myself, I did not go to the rehearsal, and the Petits Violons,[1] by whom it was

[1] The title given to Rebel and Francœur, who, when they were very young, acquired a reputation in going together from house to house playing on the violin. — R.

directed, knew not who the author was until after a general plaudit had attested the merit of the work. Everybody present was so delighted with it that, on the next day, nothing else was spoken of in various circles. Monsieur de Cury, Intendant des Menus, who was present at the rehearsal, demanded the piece for performance at Court. Duclos, who knew my intentions, and thought I should be less master of my work at the Court than at Paris, refused to give it. Cury claimed it authoritatively; Duclos persisted in his refusal; and the dispute between them was carried to such a length that one day they would have gone out from the Opera House together, had they not been separated. It was thought right to apply to me; I referred the decision to Monsieur Duclos. This made it necessary to return to him. Monsieur le Duc d'Aumont interfered; and at length Duclos thought proper to yield to authority, and the piece was given to be played at Fontainebleau.

The part to which I had been most attentive, and in which I had kept at the greatest distance from the common track, was the recitative. Mine was accented in a manner entirely new, and accompanied the utterance of the word. The directors dared not suffer this horrid innovation to pass, lest it should shock the ears of persons who never judge for themselves. Another recitative by Francueil and Jelyotte was proposed, to which I consented, but refused at the same time to have anything to do with it myself.

When everything was ready and the day of performance fixed, a proposition was made to me to go to Fontainebleau, that I might at least be present at the last rehearsal. I went with Mademoiselle Fel, Grimm, and I think the Abbé Raynal, in a Court carriage. The rehearsal was tolerable: I was more satisfied with it than I had expected to be. The orchestra was numerous, com-

posed of the musicians of the Opéra and the King's band. Jelyotte played Colin; Mademoiselle Fel, Colette; Cuvilier, the Devin; the choruses were those of the Opéra. I said but little. Jelyotte had prepared everything; I was unwilling to play the master over him; and, notwithstanding I had assumed the air of an old Roman, I was, in the midst of so many people, as bashful as a schoolboy.

The next morning, the day of performance, I went to breakfast at the Café du Grand Commun, where I found a great number of people. The rehearsal of the preceding evening, and the difficulty of getting into the theatre, were the subjects of conversation. An officer present said that he had entered with the greatest ease, gave a long account of what had passed, described the author, and related what he had said and done; but what astonished me most in this long narrative, given with as much assurance as simplicity, was that it did not contain a syllable of truth. It was clear to me that he who spoke so positively of the rehearsal had not been at it, because, without knowing him, he had before his eyes that author whom he said he had seen so plainly. What was most singular in this scene was its effect upon me. The officer was a man rather in years; he had nothing of the appearance of a fool or upstart; his features appeared to announce a man of merit, and his cross of Saint-Louis an officer of long standing. He interested me in spite of myself, notwithstanding his impudence. Whilst he uttered his lies, I blushed, looked down, and sat upon thorns. I at times endeavoured within myself to find the means of believing him to be in an involuntary error. At length, trembling lest some person should know me, and by this means affront him, I hastily drank my chocolate, without saying a word, and, holding down my head as I passed before him, got out of the coffee-house as soon as possible, whilst the company were making their remarks

upon the relation that he had given. I was no sooner in the street than I found myself in a perspiration, and, had anybody known and named me before I left the room, I am certain all the shame and embarrassment of a guilty person would have appeared in my countenance, proceeding from what I felt the poor man would have had to suffer had his lie been discovered.

I now come to one of the critical moments of my life, in which it is difficult to do anything more than to relate, because it is almost impossible that even narrative should not carry with it the marks of censure or apology. I will, however, endeavour to relate how and from what motives I acted, without adding either approbation or blame.

I was on that day in the same careless undress as usual, with a great beard and a wig badly combed. Considering this want of decency as an act of courage, I entered in this guise the theatre wherein the King, Queen, the Royal family, and the whole Court were to enter immediately after. I was conducted to a box by Monsieur de Cury, one which belonged to him. It was very spacious, upon the stage, and opposite to a lesser but more elevated one, in which the King sat with Madame de Pompadour. As I was surrounded by ladies, and the only man in front of the box, I had no doubt of my having been placed there purposely to be exposed to view. As soon as the theatre was lighted up, finding I was in the midst of people all extremely well dressed, I began to be less at my ease, and asked myself if I was in my place, and whether I was properly dressed. After a few minutes of inquietude, 'Yes,' I mentally replied, with an intrepidity which perhaps proceeded more from the impossibility of retracting than the force of all my reasoning, 'I am in my place, because I am to see my own piece performed, to which I have been invited; because I have composed it

to that end; and because, after all, no person has a greater right than I to reap the fruit of my labour and talents. I am dressed as usual, neither better nor worse; and, if I again begin to subject myself to opinion in anything, I shall shortly become a slave to it in everything. To be always consistent with myself, I ought not to blush, in any place whatever, at being dressed in a manner suitable to the state I have chosen. My exterior appearance is simple, but neither dirty nor slovenly; nor is a beard either of these in itself, because it is given us by nature, and, according to time, place, and custom, is sometimes an ornament. People will think I am ridiculous — nay, even absurd; but what signifies this to me? I ought to know how to bear censure and ridicule, provided I do not deserve them.' After this little soliloquy, I became so firm that, had it been necessary, I could have been intrepid. But, whether it was the effect of the presence of his Majesty or the natural disposition of those about me, I perceived nothing but what was civil and obliging in the curiosity of which I was the object. This so much affected me, that I began to be uneasy for myself and the fate of my piece, fearing I should efface favourable prejudices which seemed to lead to nothing but applause. I was armed against raillery, but so far overcome by kind treatment which I had not expected, that I trembled like a child when the performance began.

I soon had sufficient reason to be encouraged. The piece was very ill played with respect to the actors, but the musical part was well sung and executed. During the first scene, which is really of a delightful simplicity, I heard in the boxes a murmur of surprise and applause hitherto unknown in connection with pieces of the same kind. The fermentation was soon increased to such a degree as to be perceptible through the whole audience, and, to speak after the manner of Montesquieu, the

effect went on augmenting by its own force. In the scene between the two good little folks, this effect was complete. There is no clapping of hands before the King; therefore everything was heard, which was advantageous to the author and the piece. I heard about me a whispering of women, who appeared as beautiful as angels. They said to each other in a low voice, 'This is charming! that is ravishing!. There is not a sound which does not go to the heart!' The pleasure of giving this emotion to so many amiable persons moved me to tears; and these I could not contain in the first duo, when I remarked that I was not the only person who wept. I checked myself for a moment, on recollecting the concert of Monsieur de Tretorens. This reminiscence had the effect of the slave who held the crown over the head of the triumphant general; but my reflection was short, and I soon abandoned myself without interruption to the pleasure of enjoying my success. However, I am certain the voluptuousness of the sex was more predominant than the vanity of the author, and, had none but men been present, I certainly should not have had the incessant desire I felt of catching on my lips the delicious tears I had caused to flow. I have known pieces to excite more lively admiration, but I never saw so complete, delightful, and affecting an intoxication of the senses reign, during a whole representation, especially at Court, and at a first performance. Those who saw this must recollect it, for it has never yet been equalled.

The same evening Monsieur le Duc d'Aumont sent to desire me to be at the palace the next day at eleven o'clock, when he would present me to the King. Monsieur de Cury, who delivered me the message, added that he thought a pension was intended, and that the King wished to announce it to me himself.

Will it be believed that the night following so brilliant

a day was for me a night of anguish and perplexity? My first idea, after that of this performance, was concerned with my frequently wanting to retire; this had made me suffer very considerably at the theatre, and might torment me the next day when I should be in the gallery, or in the King's apartment, amongst all the great, waiting for the passing of his Majesty. This infirmity was the principle cause which prevented me from mixing in polite companies, and shutting myself up in female society. The idea alone of the situation in which this want might place me was sufficient to produce it to such a degree as to make me feel sick, if I would not adopt a mode of relief to which death was preferable in my eyes. None but persons who are acquainted with this situation can judge of the horror which being exposed to the risk of it inspires.

I then supposed myself before the King, presented to his Majesty, who deigned to stop and speak to me. In this situation, justness of expression and presence of mind were peculiarly necessary in answering. Would my accursed timidity, which disconcerts me in the presence of any stranger whatever, have been shaken off in the presence of the King of France; or would it have suffered me instantly to make choice of proper expressions? I wished, without laying aside the austere manner I had adopted, to show myself sensible of the honour done me by so great a monarch, and in a merited eulogium to convey some great and useful truth. I could not prepare a suitable answer without exactly knowing what his Majesty was to say to me; and had this been the case, I was certain that, in his presence, I should not recollect a word of what I had previously meditated. What, said I, will become of me in this moment, and before the whole Court, if, in my confusion, one of my usual ill-timed phrases should escape me? This danger alarmed and

terrified me; I trembled to such a degree that at all events I was determined not to expose myself to it.

I was thus losing, it is true, the pension which in some measure was offered me, but was at the same time exempting myself from the yoke it would have imposed. Adieu truth, liberty, and courage! How should I afterwards have dared to speak of disinterestedness and independence? Had I received the pension, I must either have become a flatterer or remained silent; and, moreover, who would have insured to me the payment of it? What steps should I have been under the necessity of taking! How many people must I have solicited! I should have had more trouble and anxious cares in preserving than in doing without it. Therefore, I thought I acted according to my principles by refusing, and sacrificing appearances to reality. I communicated my resolution to Grimm, who said nothing against it. To others I alleged my ill state of health, and left the Court in the morning.

My departure made some noise, and was generally condemned. My reasons could not be known to everybody; it was, therefore, easy to accuse me of foolish pride, and thus gratify the jealousy of such as felt that they would not have acted as I had done. The next day Jelyotte wrote me a note, in which he stated the success of my piece, and the pleasure it had afforded the King. 'All day long,' said he, 'his Majesty sings, with the worst voice in his kingdom, "J'ai perdu mon serviteur; j'ai perdu tout mon bonheur." ' He likewise added that in a fortnight or so *Le Devin* was to be performed a second time, which would confirm in the eyes of the public the complete success of the first representation.

Two days afterwards, about nine o'clock in the evening, as I was going to sup with Madame d'Épinay, I perceived a hackney coach pass by the door. Somebody

within made a sign to me to take a seat. I did so, and found the person to be Diderot. He spoke of the pension with more warmth than, upon such a subject, I should have expected from a philosopher. He did not blame me for having been unwilling to be presented to the King, but severely reproached me with my indifference about the pension. He observed that, although on my own account I might be disinterested, I ought not to be so on that of Madame Le Vasseur and her daughter; that it was my duty to seize every means of providing for their subsistence; and that as, after all, it could not be said I had refused the pension, he maintained I ought, since the King seemed disposed to grant it to me, to solicit and obtain it by one means or another. Although I was obliged to him for his good wishes, I could not relish his maxims, which produced a warm dispute — the first I ever had with him. All our disputes were of this kind, he prescribing to me what he pretended I ought to do, and I defending myself because I was of a different opinion.

It was late when we parted. I would have taken him to supper at Madame d'Épinay's, but he refused to go; and, notwithstanding all the efforts which at different times the desire of uniting those I love induced me to make to prevail upon him to see her, even that of conducting her to his door, which he kept shut against us, he constantly declined, and never spoke of her but with the utmost contempt. It was not until after I had quarrelled with both that they became acquainted, and that he began to speak honourably of her.

From this time Diderot and Grimm seemed to have resolved to alienate the *gouverneuses* from me, by giving them to understand that if they were not in easy circumstances the fault was mine, and that they would never make any progress with me. They endeavoured to pre-

vail on them to leave me, promising them a privilege for retailing salt, a tobacco-shop, and I know not what other advantages, through the influence of Madame d'Épinay. They likewise wished to gain over Duclos and D'Holbach, but the former constantly refused their proposals. I had at the time some intimation of what was going forward, but I was not fully acquainted with the whole until long afterwards; and I frequently had reason to lament the effects of the blind and indiscreet zeal of my friends, who, in my ill state of health, striving to reduce me to the most melancholy solitude, endeavoured, as they imagined, to render me happy by the means which, of all others, were the most likely to make me miserable.

[1753.] In the following Carnival (1753) *Le Devin* was performed at Paris, and in the interval I had sufficient time to compose the overture and the divertissement. This divertissement, such as it is printed, was to be in action from beginning to end, and in a continued subject, which, in my opinion, afforded very agreeable tableaux. But, when I proposed this idea at the Opera House, nobody would so much as hearken to me, and I was obliged to tack together music and dances in the usual manner. On this account the divertissement, although full of charming ideas, which did not diminish the beauty of the scenes, had but a slight success. I suppressed the recitative of Jelyotte, and substituted my own, such as I had first composed it, and as it is now printed; and this recitative — a little after the French manner, I confess, drawled out, instead of pronounced by the actors — far from shocking the ears of any person, succeeded equally with the airs, and seemed in the judgment of the public to possess as much musical merit. I dedicated my piece to Duclos,

who had given it his protection, and I declared that this should be my only dedication. I have, however, with his consent, written a second; but he must have felt more honoured by the exception than if I had not written a dedication to any person.

I could relate many anecdotes concerning the piece, but things of greater importance prevent me from entering into a detail of them at present. I shall perhaps resume the subject in a supplement. There is, however, one which I cannot omit, as it relates to the greater part of what is to follow. I was one day examining Baron d'Holbach's music in his cabinet. After having looked over many different kinds, he said, showing me a collection of pieces for the harpsichord, 'These were composed for me; they are full of taste and harmony, and quite unknown to anybody but myself. You ought to make a selection of one for your divertissement.' Having in my head more subjects of airs and symphonies than I could make use of, I was not anxious to have any of his. However, he pressed me so much that, from a motive of complaisance, I chose a pastoral, which I abridged and converted into a trio, for the entry of the companions of Colette. Some months afterwards, and whilst *Le Devin* still continued to be performed, calling upon Grimm I found several people about his harpsichord, whence he hastily rose on my arrival. As I accidentally looked towards his music-stand, I there saw the same collection of the Baron d'Holbach, opened precisely at the piece that he had prevailed upon me to take, assuring me at the same time that it should never go out of his hands. Some time afterwards I again saw this collection open on the harpsichord of Monsieur d'Épinay one day when he gave a little concert. Neither Grimm nor anybody else ever spoke to me of this air, and my reason for mentioning it here is that some time

afterwards a rumour was spread that I was not the author of *Le Devin du Village*. As I never made great progress in the mere mechanism of the art, I am persuaded that, had it not been for my *Dictionnaire de Musique*, it would in the end have been said that I did not understand it.[1]

Some time before *Le Devin du Village* was performed, a company of Italian *bouffons* had arrived at Paris, and were ordered to perform at the Opera House, without the effect that they would produce there being foreseen. Although they were detestable, and the orchestra, at that time very ignorant, mutilated at will the pieces they gave, they did not fail to inflict on French opera an injury that will never be repaired. The comparison of these two kinds of music, heard the same evening in the same theatre, opened the ears of the French. Nobody could endure their languid music after the marked lively accents of Italian composition; and the moment the *bouffons* had done everybody went away. The managers were obliged to change the order of representation, and let the performance of the *bouffons* be the last. *Eglé*, *Pygmalion*, and *Le Sylphe* were successively given: nothing could bear the comparison. The *Devin du Village* was the only piece that did it, and this was still relished after *La Serva Padrona*. When I composed my interlude, my head was filled with these pieces, and they gave me the first idea of it. I was, however, far from imagining they would one day be passed in review by the side of my composition. Had I been a plagiarist, how many pilferings would have been manifest, and what care would have been taken to point them out to the public! But I had done nothing of the kind. All attempts to discover any such thing were fruitless; noth-

[1] I little suspected, too, that this would be said of me, notwithstanding my *Dictionnaire*. — R.

ing was found in my music which led to the recollection of that of any other person, and my whole composition, compared with the pretended originals, was found to be as new as the musical characters I had invented. Had Mondonville or Rameau undergone the same ordeal, they would have lost much of their substance.

The *bouffons* acquired for Italian music very warm partisans. All Paris was divided into two parties, the violence of which was greater than if an affair of state or religion had been in question. One of them, the more powerful and numerous, composed of the great, of men of fortune, and the ladies, supported French music; the other, more lively and confident, and fuller of enthusiasm, was composed of real connoisseurs, and men of talents and genius. This little group assembled at the Opera House, under the box belonging to the Queen. The other party filled up the rest of the pit and the theatre; but the heads were mostly assembled under the box of his Majesty. Hence the party names of 'Coin du Roi,' 'Coin de la Reine,' then in great celebrity. The dispute, as it became more animated, produced several pamphlets. The King's corner aimed at pleasantry; it was laughed at by *Le Petit Prophète.* It attempted to reason; the *Lettre sur la Musique Française* refuted its reasoning. These two little productions, the former of which was by Grimm, the latter by myself, are the only ones which have outlived the quarrel; all the rest are forgotten.

But *Le Petit Prophète*, which, notwithstanding all I could say, was for a long time attributed to me, was considered as a pleasantry, and did not produce the least inconvenience to the author: whereas the *Lettre sur la Musique* was taken seriously, and incensed against me the whole nation, which thought itself offended by this attack on its music. The description of the incredible

effect of this pamphlet would be worthy of the pen of Tacitus. The great quarrel between the Parliament and the clergy was then at its height. The Parliament had just been exiled; the fermentation was general; everything announced an approaching insurrection. The pamphlet appeared; from that moment every other quarrel was forgotten; the perilous state of French music was the only thing by which the attention of the public was engaged, and the only insurrection was against myself. This was so general that it has never since been entirely calmed. At court, the Bastille or banishment was absolutely determined on, and a *lettre de cachet* would have been issued had not Monsieur de Voyer clearly shown that such a step would be ridiculous. Were I to say this pamphlet probably prevented a revolution, the reader would imagine I was in a dream. It is, however, a fact, the truth of which all Paris can attest, it being no more than fifteen years since the date of this singular incident.

Although no attempts were made on my liberty, I suffered numerous insults, and even my life was in danger. The musicians of the Opera orchestra humanely resolved to murder me as I went out of the theatre. Of this I received information; but the only effect it produced on me was to make me more assiduously attend the Opera: and I did not learn until a considerable time afterwards that Monsieur Ancelet, officer in the Mousquetaires, and who had a friendship for me, had prevented the effect of this conspiracy by giving me an escort, which, unknown to myself, accompanied me on my departure. The direction of the Opera House had just been given to the municipality. The first exploit performed by the Prévôt des Marchands was to take from me my freedom of the theatre, and this in the most uncivil manner possible. Admission was publicly refused me on my presenting

myself, so that I was obliged to take an amphitheatre ticket, that I might not that evening have the mortification to return as I had come. This injustice was the more shameful, as the only price I had set on my piece when I gave it to the managers was a perpetual freedom of the house; for although this was a right common to every author, and which I enjoyed under a double title, I especially stipulated for it in presence of Monsieur Duclos. It is true that the treasurer brought me fifty louis, for which I had not asked; but, besides the smallness of the sum, compared with that which, according to the rules established in such cases, was due to me, this payment had nothing in common with the right of entry formally granted, and which was entirely independent of it. There was in this behaviour such a complication of iniquity and brutality, that the public, notwithstanding its animosity against me, which was then at its height, was universally shocked at it, and many persons who had insulted me on the preceding evening, the next day exclaimed in the open theatre that it was shameful thus to deprive an author of his right of entry, and particularly one who had so well deserved it, and was entitled to claim it for himself and another person. So true is the Italian proverb: 'Ogn'un ama la giustizia in cosa d'altrui.'

In this situation the only thing I had to do was to demand my work, since the price I had agreed to receive for it was refused me. For this purpose I wrote to Monsieur d'Argenson, who attended to this department of the Opéra. I likewise enclosed to him a memoir which was unanswerable; but this, as well as my letter, was ineffectual, and I received no answer to either. The silence of that unjust man hurt me extremely, and did not contribute to increase the very moderate good opinion I always had of his character and abilities. It was in this

manner that the managers kept my piece, while they deprived me of the price for which I had given it them. From the weak to the strong, such an act would be a theft; from the strong to the weak, it is only an appropriation of another's property.

With respect to the pecuniary advantages of the work, although it did not produce me a fourth part of the sum it would have brought to any other person, they were considerable enough to enable me to subsist several years, and to make amends for the ill-success of copying, which went on but very slowly. I received a hundred louis from the King; fifty from Madame de Pompadour, for the performance at Bellevue, where she herself played the part of Colin; fifty from the Opéra; and five hundred francs from Pissot for the engraving; so that this interlude, which cost me no more than five or six weeks' application, produced, notwithstanding the ill-treatment I received and my own stupidity, almost as much money as I have since obtained by my *Émile*, which had cost me twenty years' meditation and three years' labour. But I paid dearly for the pecuniary ease I received from the piece, by the infinite vexations it brought upon me. It was the germ of the secret jealousies which did not break out until a long time afterwards. After its success I did not remark, either in Grimm, Diderot, or any of the men of letters with whom I was acquainted, the same cordiality and frankness, nor that pleasure in seeing me, which I had previously experienced. The moment I appeared at the Baron's, the conversation was no longer general. The company divided into small parties, whispered into each other's ears, and I remained alone, without knowing to whom to address myself. I endured for a long time this mortifying neglect; and, perceiving that Madame d'Holbach, who was mild and amiable, still received me well, I bore with the vulgarity of her hus-

band as long as it was possible. But he one day attacked me without reason or pretence, and with such brutality, in presence of Diderot, who said not a word, and Margency, who since that time has often told me how much he admired the moderation and mildness of my answers, that, at length driven from his house by this unworthy treatment, I went away with a resolution never to enter it again. This did not, however, prevent me from always speaking honourably of him and his house, whilst he continually expressed himself relative to me in the most insulting terms, calling me that *petit cuistre*, without, however, being able to charge me with having done either to himself or any person to whom he was attached the most trifling injury. In this manner he verified my predictions and fears. I am of opinion that my pretended friends would have pardoned me for having written books, and even excellent ones, because this merit was not foreign to themselves, but that they could not forgive my writing an opera, nor the brilliant success it had, because there was not one of them capable of entering the same path, nor in a situation to aspire to like honours. Duclos, the only person superior to this jealousy, seemed to have become more attached to me. He introduced me to Mademoiselle Quinault, in whose house I received polite attention and civility to as great an extreme as I had found the reverse in that of Monsieur d'Holbach.

Whilst the performance of *Le Devin du Village* was continued at the Opera House, negotiations with its composer were opened — though less happily — at the Comédie Française. Not having, during seven or eight years, been able to get my *Narcisse* performed at the Italiens, I had, by the bad performance in French of the actors, become disgusted with it, and would rather have had my piece received at the Français than by them. I mentioned this to La Noue, the comedian, with whom

I had become acquainted, and who, as everybody knows, was a man of merit and an author. He was pleased with the piece, and promised to get it performed without suffering the author's name to be known, and in the meantime procured me the freedom of the theatre, which was extremely agreeable to me, for I always preferred the Théâtre Français to the two others. The piece was favourably received, and without the author's name being mentioned; but I have reason to believe it was known to the actors and actresses, and many other persons. Mesdemoiselles Gaussin and Grandval played the amorous girls; and, although the whole performance, in my opinion, lacked intelligence, the piece could not be said to be absolutely ill played. Nevertheless, the indulgence of the public, for which I was grateful, surprised me; the audience had the patience to listen to it from beginning to end, and to endure a second representation without showing the least sign of disapprobation. For my part, I was so wearied with the first that I could not hold out to the end; and leaving the theatre I went into the Café de Procope, where I found Boissy and others of my acquaintance, who had probably been as much bored as myself. I there frankly cried *peccavi*, humbly or haughtily avowing myself the author of the piece, and judging it as everybody else had done. This public avowal by the author of a bad piece was much admired, and was by no means painful to myself. My self-love, indeed, was flattered by the courage with which I made it, and I am of opinion that on this occasion there was more pride in speaking than there would have been foolish shame in being silent. However, as it was certain the piece, although frigid in the performance, would bear to be read, I had it printed; and in the preface, which I account well written, I began to make my principles more public than I had hitherto done.

I soon had an opportunity to explain them entirely in a work of the greatest importance; for it was, I think, in this year 1753 that the programme of the Academy of Dijon upon the 'Origin of Inequality amongst Mankind' made its appearance. Struck with this great question, I was surprised that the Academy had dared to propose it; but, since it had shown sufficient courage to do it, I thought I might well venture to treat it, and undertook the discussion.

That I might meditate on this grand subject more at my ease, I went to Saint-Germain for seven or eight days with Thérèse; our hostess, who was a good kind of woman; and one of her female friends. I consider this walk as one of the most agreeable that I ever took. The weather was very fine; these good women took upon themselves all the care and expense; Thérèse amused herself with them; and I, free from all domestic concerns, diverted myself, without restraint, at meal-times. All the rest of the day, wandering in the forest, I sought for and found there the image of the primitive ages of which I boldly traced the history. I confounded the pitiful lies of men; I dared to unveil their nature; to follow the progress of time, and the things by which nature has been disfigured; and, comparing self-made man with natural man, to show him, in his pretended improvement, the real source of his miseries. My mind, elevated by these sublime contemplations, ascended to the Divinity, and thence, seeing my fellow-creatures follow in the blind track of their prejudices that of their errors, their misfortunes, and their crimes, I exclaimed to them, in a feeble voice, which they could not hear: Madmen, who continually cry out against nature! know that all your evils proceed from yourselves!

From these meditations resulted *Le Discours sur l'Inégalité*, a work more to the taste of Diderot than any

of my other writings, and respecting which his advice was of the greatest service to me.[1] It was, however, understood by few readers throughout all Europe, and not one of these would ever speak of it. I had written it to become a competitor for the prize, but sent it away fully persuaded that it would not obtain it, well convinced that it was not for productions of this nature that the rewards of academies were founded.

This excursion and this occupation enlived my spirits and were of service to my health. Several years before, tormented by my disorder, I had given myself up entirely to the care of physicians, who, without alleviating my sufferings, exhausted my strength, and destroyed my constitution. At my return from Saint-Germain, I found myself stronger and perceived my health to be improved. I followed this indication, and, determined to recover or die without the aid of physicians and medicine, I bade them adieu for ever, and lived from day to day, keeping close when I found myself indisposed, and going abroad when I had sufficient strength. The manner of living in Paris amidst people of pretensions was so little to my liking; the cabals of men of letters, their undignified quarrels, the little candour in their writings, and the air of importance they gave themselves in the world, were so odious, so opposite, to me; I found so little mildness, openness of heart, and frankness in the

[1] At the time I wrote this I had not the least suspicion of the grand conspiracy of Diderot and Grimm, otherwise I should easily have discovered how much the former abused my confidence, by giving to my writings that severity and moroseness which were not to be found in them from the moment he ceased to direct me. The passage of the philosopher who argues with himself, and stops his ears against the pleading of a man in distress, is after his manner; and he furnished me with others still more extraordinary, which I could never resolve to make use of. But, attributing this moroseness to the tone which he had acquired in the donjon of Vincennes, and of which there is a very sufficient dose in his *Clairval*, I never once suspected the least unfriendly dealing. — R.

intercourse even of my friends, that, disgusted with this life of tumult, I began ardently to long to reside in the country, and, perceiving that my occupation would not permit me to do it, I went to pass there all the time I had to spare. For several months I went directly after dinner to walk alone in the Bois de Boulogne, meditating on subjects for future works, and not returning until evening.

[1754–1756.] Gauffecourt, with whom I was at that time extremely intimate, being on account of his employment obliged to go to Geneva, proposed to me the journey, to which I consented. The state of my health was such as to require the cares of the *gouverneuse;* it was therefore decided that she should accompany us, and that her mother should take charge of the house. After thus having made our arrangements, we set off all three on the 1st of June 1754.

I must take particular note of this journey as the epoch of the first experience which, until that time, when I was forty-two years of age, severely wounded the free and confiding nature with which I was born, and to which I had abandoned myself without reserve or inconvenience. We had an ordinary travelling carriage, in which with the same horses we progressed by very short stages. I frequently got out and walked. We had scarcely performed half our journey when Thérèse showed the greatest repugnance to being left in the carriage with Gauffecourt; and when, notwithstanding her remonstrances, I would get out as usual, she insisted upon doing the same, and walking with me. I chided her for this caprice, and so strongly opposed it that at length she found herself obliged to declare to me the cause. I thought I was in a dream, my astonishment was beyond expression, when I learned that my friend Monsieur de Gauffecourt, up-

wards of sixty years of age, crippled by the gout, impotent and exhausted by pleasures, had, since our departure, incessantly endeavoured to corrupt a person who belonged to his friend, and was no longer young nor handsome, by the most base and shameful means, such as presenting to her a purse, attempting to inflame her imagination by the reading of an abominable book, and by the sight of infamous pictures with which it was filled. Thérèse, full of indignation, once threw his scandalous book out of the carriage; and I learned that, on the first evening of our journey, a violent headache having obliged me to retire to bed before supper, he had employed the whole time of this *tête-à-tête* in actions more worthy of a satyr than a man of worth and honour, to whom I had entrusted my companion and myself. What astonishment and hitherto unfelt grief of heart for me! I, who until then had believed friendship to be inseparable from every amiable and noble sentiment which constitutes all its charm, for the first time in my life found myself under the necessity of connecting it with disdain, and of withdrawing my confidence and esteem from a man for whom I had an affection, and by whom I imagined myself beloved! The wretch concealed from me his turpitude; and, that I might not expose Thérèse, I was obliged to conceal from him my contempt, and secretly to harbour in my heart sentiments foreign to its nature. Sweet and sacred illusion of friendship! Gauffecourt first took thy veil from before my eyes. What cruel hands have since that time prevented it from again being drawn over them!

At Lyons I quitted Gauffecourt to take the road through Savoy, being unable again to be so near Mamma without seeing her. I saw her — good God, in what a situation! How contemptible! What remained to her of primitive virtue? Was it the same Madame de Warens, formerly so gay and lively, to whom the Curé Pontverre

had given me recommendations? How my heart was wounded! The only resource I saw for her was to quit the country. I earnestly, but vainly, repeated the invitation I had several times given her in my letters to come and live peacefully with me, assuring her I would dedicate the rest of my life, and that of Thérèse, to render hers happy. Attached to her pension, from which, although it was regularly paid, she had not for a long time received the least advantage, she would not listen to me. I again gave her a trifling part of the contents of my purse, much less than I ought to have done, and considerably less than I should have offered her had I not been certain of its not being of the least service to herself. During my residence at Geneva she made a journey into Chablais, and came to see me at Grange-Canal. She was in want of money to continue her journey: what I had in my pocket was insufficient to this purpose, but an hour afterwards I sent it her by Thérèse. Poor Mamma! I must relate this proof of the goodness of her heart. A little ring was the last jewel she had left. She took it from her finger to put it upon that of Thérèse, who instantly replaced it upon that whence it had been taken, kissing the generous hand which she bathed with her tears. Ah! this was the proper moment to discharge my debt! I should have abandoned everything to follow her, and share her fate, let it be what it would, till death. I did nothing of the kind. Engaged by another attachment, I found my sentiments towards her abated by the slender hopes that remained of being useful to her. I sighed after her, but I did not follow her. Of all the remorse I ever felt, this was the strongest and most lasting. I merited thereby the terrible chastisements with which I have since that time been incessantly overwhelmed: may these have expiated my ingratitude! Of this I appear guilty in my conduct but my heart has been

too much torn by what I did ever to have been that of an ingrate.

Before my departure from Paris I had sketched out the dedication of my *Discours sur l'Inégalité*. I finished it at Chambéri, and dated it from that place, thinking that, to avoid all chicanery, it was better not to date it either from France or Geneva. When I arrived in that city I abandoned myself to the republican enthusiasm which had brought me to it. This was augmented by the reception I there met with. Treated with extreme kindness by persons of every description, I gave myself up entirely to patriotic zeal, and, mortified at being excluded from the rights of a citizen by the profession of a religion different from that of my forefathers, I resolved openly to return to the latter. I thought that the Gospel being the same for every Christian, and the only difference in religious opinions the result of the explanations given by men to that which they did not understand, it was the exclusive right of the sovereign power in every country to fix the mode of worship, and these unintelligible dogmas; and that consequently it was the duty of a citizen to admit the one and conform to the other in the manner prescribed by the law. Conversation with the Encyclopædists, far from staggering my faith, gave it new strength by my natural aversion to disputes and party. The study of man and the universe had everywhere shown me the final causes and the wisdom by which they were directed. The reading of the Bible, and especially of the New Testament, to which I had for several years past applied myself, had given me a sovereign contempt for the base and stupid interpretations given to the words of Jesus Christ by persons the least worthy of understanding Him. In a word, philosophy, while it attached me to the essential part of religion, had detached me from the trash of the little formu-

laries with which men had obscured it. Judging that for a reasonable man there were not two ways of being a Christian, I was also of opinion that in each country everything relative to form and discipline was within the jurisdiction of the laws. From this principle, so social and pacific, and which has brought upon me such cruel persecutions, it followed that, desiring to be a citizen, I must become a Protestant, and conform anew to the mode of worship established in my country. This I resolved upon; I moreover put myself under the instructions of the pastor of the parish in which I lived, and which was without the city. All I desired was not to appear at the Consistory. However, the ecclesiastical edict was expressly to that effect; but it was agreed upon to dispense with it in my favour, and a commission of five or six members was named to receive in private my profession of faith. Unfortunately the Minister Perdriau, a mild and an amiable man, with whom I was on friendly terms, took it into his head to tell me the members were rejoiced at the thoughts of hearing me speak in the little assembly. This expectation alarmed me to such a degree that, having during three weeks studied night and day a little discourse that I had prepared, I was so confused when I ought to have pronounced it that I could not utter a single word, and during the conference I had the appearance of the most stupid schoolboy. The persons deputed spoke for me, and I answered yes and no, like a blockhead; I was afterwards admitted to the communion, and reinstated in my rights as a citizen. I was enrolled as such in the list of guards, paid by none but citizens and burgesses, and I attended at a council-general extraordinary to receive the oath from the Syndic Mussard. I was so impressed with the kindness shown me on this occasion by the Council and the Consistory, and by the

great civility and obliging behaviour of the magistrates, ministers, and citizens, that, pressed by the worthy Deluc, who was incessant in his persuasions, and still more so by my own inclination, I did not think of going back to Paris for any other purpose than to break up housekeeping, settle my little affairs, find a situation for Monsieur and Madame Le Vasseur, or provide for their subsistence, and then return with Thérèse to Geneva, there to reside for the rest of my days.

After taking this resolution, I suspended all serious affairs, the better to enjoy the company of my friends until the time of my departure. Of all the amusements of which I partook, that with which I was most pleased was sailing round the lake in a boat, with Deluc the father, his daughter-in-law, his two sons, and my Thérèse. We gave seven days to this excursion, in the finest weather possible. I preserved a lively remembrance of the sites which struck me at the other extremity of the lake, and of which, some years afterwards, I gave a description in *La Nouvelle Héloïse.*

The principal acquaintances I made at Geneva, besides the Delucs, of whom I have spoken, were the young Minister Vernes, with whom I had already been acquainted at Paris, and of whom I then formed a better opinion than I afterwards had of him; Monsieur Perdriau, then a country pastor, now professor of literature, whose mild and agreeable society will ever make me regret the loss of it, although he has since thought it good manners to detach himself from me; Monsieur Jalabert, at that time professor of physics, since become counsellor and syndic, to whom I read my *Discours sur l'Inégalité* — but not the dedication — with which he seemed to be delighted; the Professor Lullin, with whom I maintained a correspondence until his death, and who gave me a commission to purchase books for the college

library; the Professor Vernet, who, like most other people, turned his back upon me after I had given him proofs of attachment and confidence, of which he ought to have been sensible, if a theologian can be sensible of anything; Chappuis, clerk and successor to Gauffecourt, whom he wished to supplant, and who, soon afterwards, was himself supplanted; Marcet de Mézières, an old friend of my father, and who had shown himself to be mine, but who, after having well deserved of his country, became a dramatic author, and, pretending to a place in the Council of Two Hundred, changed his principles and became ridiculous before he died. But he from whom I expected most was Moultou, a very promising young man by his talents and his brilliant intellect, whom I have always loved, although his conduct with respect to me was frequently equivocal, and notwithstanding his being connected with my most cruel enemies, yet whom I cannot but look upon as destined to become the defender of my memory and the avenger of his friend.

In the midst of these dissipations I neither lost the taste for my solitary excursions nor the practice of them. I frequently made long ones upon the banks of the lake, during which my mind, accustomed to reflection, did not remain idle. I digested the plan already formed of my *Institutions Politiques*, of which I shall shortly have to speak. I meditated a *Histoire du Valais;* the plan of a tragedy in prose, the subject of which, nothing less than Lucretia, did not deprive me of the hope of turning the laugh against my detractors, although I should dare again to exhibit that unfortunate heroine, when she could no longer be suffered upon any French stage. I at that time tried my abilities with Tacitus, and translated the first book of his history, which will be found amongst my papers.

After a residence of four months at Geneva, I returned in the month of October to Paris, and avoided passing through Lyons, that I might not again have to travel with Gauffecourt. As the arrangements I had made did not require my being in Geneva until the following spring, I returned, during the winter, to my habits and occupations. The principal of the latter was examining the proof-sheets of my *Discours sur l'Inégalité*, which I had procured to be printed in Holland, by the bookseller Rey, with whom I had just become acquainted at Geneva. This work was dedicated to the Republic; but as the dedication might be unpleasing to the Council, I wished to ascertain its effect at Geneva before I returned thither. This was not favourable to me; and the dedication, which the purest patriotism had dictated, only created me enemies in the Council, and inspired many of the burgesses with jealousy. Monsieur Chouet, at that time First Syndic, wrote me a polite but very cold letter, which will be found amongst my papers, packet A, No. 3. I received from private persons, amongst others from Deluc and De Jalabert, a few compliments, and these were all. I did not perceive that a single Genevese was honestly pleased with the hearty zeal found in the work. This indifference shocked all those by whom it was remarked. I remember that, dining one day at Clichy, at Madame Dupin's, with Crommelin, Resident from the Republic, and Monsieur de Mairan, the latter openly declared the Council owed me a present and public honours for the work, and that it would dishonour itself if it failed in either. Crommelin, who was a dark-complexioned and mischievous little man, dared not reply in my presence, but he made a frightful grimace, which drew a smile from Madame Dupin. The only advantage this work procured me, besides that resulting from the satisfaction of my own heart, was the title of citizen

given me by my friends, afterwards by the public after their example, and which I afterwards lost by having too well deserved it.[1]

This ill success would not have prevented my retiring to Geneva, had not more powerful motives tended to the same effect. Monsieur d'Épinay, wishing to add a wing which was wanting to the Château Chevrette, was at an immense expense in completing it. Having gone one day with Madame d'Épinay to see the progress of the work, we continued our walk a quarter of a league further, to the reservoir of the waters of the park, which joined the Forest of Montmorency, and where there was a handsome kitchen garden with a little lodge, much out of repair, called the Hermitage. This solitary and very agreeable place had struck me when I saw it for the first time before my journey to Geneva. I had exclaimed in my transport: 'Ah, madame, what a delightful habitation! This asylum was purposely designed for me.' Madame d'Épinay did not seem to pay much attention to what I said, but in this second journey I was quite surprised to find, instead of the old decayed building, a small house almost entirely new, well laid out, and very habitable for a little family of three persons. Madame d'Épinay had caused this to be done in silence, and at a very small expense, by detaching a few materials and some of the workmen from the château. She now said to me, on remarking my surprise: 'My good bear, here behold your shelter: it is you who have chosen it; friendship offers it to you. I hope this will remove from you the cruel idea of separating from me.' I do not think I was ever in my life more strongly or more deliciously affected. I bathed with tears the beneficent hand of my friend; and if I was not conquered from that very instant, I was extremely staggered. Madame d'Épinay, who

[1] After the condemnation of *Émile*.

would not be denied, became so pressing, employed so many means, so many people, to circumvent me, proceeding even so far as to gain over Madame Le Vasseur and her daughter, that at length she triumphed over my resolutions. Renouncing the idea of residing in my own country, I resolved, I promised, to inhabit the Hermitage; and, whilst the building was drying, Madame d'Épinay took care to prepare furniture, so that everything was ready for occupation in the following spring.

One thing which greatly aided me in determining was the residence that Voltaire had chosen near Geneva. I foresaw that this man would cause a revolution there, and that I should find in my country the style and manners which drove me from Paris; that I should be under the necessity of incessantly struggling, and have no other alternative than that of being an insupportable pedant, or a bad and cowardly citizen. The letter which Voltaire had written to me on my last work induced me to insinuate my fears in my answer, and the effect this produced confirmed them. From that moment I considered Geneva as lost, and I was not deceived. I perhaps ought to have breasted the storm, had I thought myself capable. But what could I have done alone, timid and speaking badly, against a man who was arrogant, opulent, supported by the credit of the great, eloquent, and already the idol of the women and young men? I was afraid of uselessly exposing myself to danger to no purpose. I listened to nothing but my peaceful disposition, to my love of repose, which if it then deceived me still continues to deceive me on the same subject. By retiring to Geneva I should have avoided great misfortunes, but I have my doubts whether, with all my ardent and patriotic zeal, I should have been able to effect anything great and useful for my country.

Tronchin, who about the same time went to reside at

Geneva, came afterwards to Paris to play the mountebank, and brought back treasures. On his arrival he came to see me, with the Chevalier de Jaucourt. Madame d'Épinay had a strong desire to consult him in private, but so busy was he that this was not easily effected. She addressed herself to me, and I engaged Tronchin to go and see her. Thus under my auspices they began a connection, which was afterwards strengthened at my expense. Such has ever been my destiny: the moment I had united two friends, who were separately mine, they never failed to combine against me. Although, in the conspiracy then formed by the Tronchins for the subjection of their country, they must all have borne me a mortal hatred, the doctor still continued friendly to me: he even wrote me a letter after his return to Geneva, to propose to me the place of honorary librarian. But I had taken my resolution, and the offer did not tempt me to depart from it.

About this time I again visited Monsieur d'Holbach. My visit was occasioned by the death of his wife, which, as well as that of Madame Francueil, happened whilst I was at Geneva. Diderot, when he communicated to me these events, spoke of the deep affliction of the husband. His grief affected my heart. I myself was grieved for the loss of that excellent woman, and wrote to Monsieur d'Holbach a letter of condolence. I forgot all the wrongs he had done me, and at my return from Geneva, and after he had made the tour of France with Grimm and other friends to alleviate his affliction, I went to see him, and continued my visits until my departure for the Hermitage. As soon as it was known in his circle that Madame d'Épinay was preparing me a habitation there, innumerable sarcasms, founded upon the want I must feel of the flattery and amusements of the city, and the supposition of my not being able to

support the solitude for a fortnight, were uttered against me. Feeling within myself how I stood affected, I left him and his friends to say what they pleased, and pursued my intention. Monsieur d'Holbach rendered me some services [1] in finding a place for the old Le Vasseur, who was eighty years of age, and a burden to his wife, from which she begged me to relieve her. He was put into a house of charity, where, almost as soon as he arrived, age and the grief of finding himself removed from his family sent him to the grave. His wife and all his children, except Thérèse, did not much regret his loss; but she, who loved him tenderly, has ever since been inconsolable, and never forgiven herself for having suffered him, at so advanced an age, to end his days in any other house than her own.

Much about the same time I received a visit I little expected, although it was from a very old acquaintance. My friend Venture, accompanied by another man, came upon me one morning by surprise. What a change did I discover in his person! Instead of his former gracefulness, he appeared sottish and vulgar, which made me extremely reserved with him. Either my eyes deceived me, or debauchery had stupefied his mind, or all his first splendour was the effect of his youth which was past. I saw him almost with indifference, and we parted rather coolly. But when he was gone the remembrance of our former connection so strongly brought back the recollection of my younger days, so charmingly, so prudently dedicated to that angelic woman, who was

[1] This is an instance of the treachery of my memory. A long time after I had written the above, I learned, in conversing with my wife concerning her poor old father, that it was not Monsieur d'Holbach, but Monsieur de Chenonceaux, then one of the administrators of the Hôtel-Dieu, who procured this asylum for him. I had so totally forgotten the circumstances, and the idea of Monsieur d'Holbach's having done it was so strong in my mind, that I would have sworn it had been the latter. — R.

not much less changed than himself; the little anecdotes of that happy time, the romantic day of Toune passed with so much innocence and enjoyment in the company of those two charming girls, from whom a kiss of the hand was the only favour, and which, notwithstanding its being so trifling, had left me such lively, affecting, and lasting regrets — all the ravishing delirium of a young heart, which I had just felt in all its force, and of which I had thought the season for ever past for me — the tender remembrance of these delightful circumstances made me shed tears over my faded youth and its transports for ever lost to me. Ah! how many tears should I have shed over their tardy and fatal return, had I foreseen the evils I had yet to suffer from them!

Before I left Paris, I enjoyed during the winter which preceded my retreat a pleasure after my own heart, and of which I tasted in all its purity. Palissot, Academician of Nancy, known by a few dramatic compositions, had just had one of them performed at Lunéville before the King of Poland. He perhaps thought to make his court by representing in his piece a man who had dared to enter into a literary dispute with the King. Stanislaus, who was generous, and did not like satire, was filled with indignation at the author's daring to be personal in his presence. The Comte de Tressan, by order of the prince, wrote to D'Alembert, as well as to myself, to inform me that it was the intention of his Majesty to have Palissot expelled from his Academy. My answer was a strong solicitation in favour of Palissot, begging Monsieur de Tressan to intercede with the King in his behalf. His pardon was granted, and M. de Tressan, when he communicated to me the information in the name of the monarch, added that the matter should be inserted in the register of the Academy. I replied that this was less

granting a pardon than perpetuating a punishment. At length, after repeated solicitations, I obtained a promise that nothing relative to the affair should be inserted in the register, and that no public trace should remain of it. The promise was accompanied, as well on the part of the King as on that of M. de Tressan, with assurances of esteem and respect, with which I was extremely flattered; and I felt on this occasion that the esteem of men who are themselves worthy of it produces in the mind a sentiment infinitely more noble and pleasing than that of vanity. I have transcribed into my collection the letters of M. de Tressan, with my answers to them; and the originals of the former will be found in packet A, Nos. 9, 10, and 11.

I am perfectly aware that if ever these memoirs become public I myself here perpetuate the remembrance of a fact of which I would wish to efface every trace; but I transmit many others as much against my inclination. The grand object of my undertaking, constantly before my eyes, and the indispensable duty of fulfilling it to its utmost extent, will not permit me to be turned aside by trifling considerations, which would lead me from my purpose. In my strange and unparalleled situation I owe too much to truth to be further than this indebted to any person whatever. They who wish to know me well must be acquainted with me in every point of view, in every relative situation, both good and bad. My confessions are necessarily connected with those of many other people: I write both with the same frankness in everything that relates to that which has befallen me, believing that I am not obliged to spare any person more than myself, although it is my wish to do it. I am determined always to be just and true, to say of others all the good I can, never speaking of evil except when it relates to my own conduct, and there is a necessity for

my so doing. Who, in the situation in which the world has placed me, has a right to require more at my hands? My confessions are not intended to appear during my lifetime, nor that of those whom they may affect. Were I master of my own destiny, and that of the book I am now writing, it should not be made public until long after my death and theirs. But the efforts which the dread of truth obliges my powerful enemies to make to destroy every trace of it render it necessary for me to do everything which the strictest right and the most severe justice will permit to preserve what I have written. Were the remembrance of me to be lost at my dissolution, rather than expose any person alive, I would, without a murmur, suffer an unjust and momentary reproach; but since my name is to live, it is my duty to endeavour to transmit with it to posterity the remembrance of the unfortunate man by whom it was borne, such as he really was, and not such as his unjust enemies incessantly endeavoured to describe him.

# BOOK IX

## [1756]

MY impatience to inhabit the Hermitage not permitting me to await the return of fine weather, the moment my lodging was prepared I hastened to take possession of it, to the great amusement of the 'Coterie Holbachique,' which publicly predicted I should not be able to support solitude for three months, and that I should return disappointed to Paris, and live there as they did. For my part, having for fifteen years been out of my element, finding myself upon the eve of returning to it, I paid no attention to their pleasantries. Since, contrary to my inclinations, I had again entered the world, I had incessantly regretted my dear Charmettes, and the agreeable life I led there. I felt a natural inclination to retirement and the country: it was impossible for me to live happily elsewhere. At Venice, in the train of public affairs, placed in a kind of reflected dignity, in the pride of projects of advancement; at Paris, in the vortex of the great world, in the luxury of suppers, in the brilliancy of spectacles, in the rays of false glory — my groves, rivulets, and solitary walks constantly presented themselves to my recollection, interrupted my thoughts, rendered me melancholy, and made me sigh with desire. All the labour to which I had subjected myself, every project of ambition which by fits had animated my ardour, all had for object this happy country retirement, which I now thought near at hand. Without having acquired that moderate independence which I had

judged to be the only means of accomplishing my views, I imagined myself, in my particular situation, to be able to do without it, and that I could attain the same end by means quite opposite. I had no regular income, but I possessed some talents, and had acquired a name. My wants were few, and I had freed myself from all those which were most expensive, and which merely depended on prejudice and opinion. Besides this, although naturally indolent, I was laborious when I chose to be so, and my idleness was less that of an indolent man than that of an independent one who applies to business when it pleases him. My profession of a copyist of music was neither splendid nor lucrative, but it was certain. The world gave me credit for the courage I had shown in making choice of it. I might depend upon having sufficient employment to enable me to live. Two thousand francs which remained of the produce of *Le Devin du Village*, and my other writings, were a sum which kept me from being straitened, and several works I had upon the stocks promised me, without extorting money from the booksellers, supplies sufficient to enable me to work at my ease without exhausting myself, even by turning to advantage the leisure of my walks. My little family, consisting of three persons, all of whom were usefully employed, was not expensive to support. Finally, from my resources, proportioned to my wants and desires, I might reasonably expect a happy and permanent existence in that manner of life which my inclination had induced me to adopt.

I might have taken the interested side of the question, and, instead of subjecting my pen to copying, entirely devoted it to works which, from the elevation to which I had soared, and at which I found myself capable of continuing, might have enabled me to live in the midst of abundance, nay, even of opulence, had I been the least

disposed to join the manœuvres of an author to the care of publishing a good book. But I felt that writing for bread would soon have stifled my genius and destroyed my talents, which were less in my pen than in my heart, and solely proceeded from an elevated and noble manner of thinking, by which alone they could be cherished and preserved. Nothing vigorous nor great can come of a pen totally venal. Necessity, nay even avarice, perhaps, would have made me write rather rapidly than well. If the desire of success had not led me into cabals, it might have inclined me to publish works pleasing to the multitude rather than such as were true and useful, and instead of a distinguished author, which I might possibly become, I should have been nothing more than a scribbler. No; I have always felt that the profession of letters was illustrious in proportion as it was less a trade. It is too difficult to think nobly when we think for a livelihood. To be able — to dare even — to speak great truths, an author must be independent of success. I gave my books to the public with a certainty of having written for the common good, without the least concern for what was to follow. If the work was thrown aside, so much the worse for such as did not choose to profit by it. Their approbation was not necessary to enable me to live; my profession was sufficient to maintain me had not my works had a sale, for which reason indeed they all sold.

It was on the 9th of April 1756 that I left cities, never to reside in them again; for I do not call a residence the few days I afterwards spent in Paris, London, or other cities, always on the wing, or contrary to my inclinations. Madame d'Épinay came and took us all three in her coach; her farmer carted away my small baggage, and I was put into possession the same day. I found my little retreat simply furnished, but neatly, and even with some taste. The hand which had lent its aid in this furnishing

rendered it inestimable in my eyes, and I thought it charming to be the guest of my female friend in a house of my own choice, which she had caused to be built purposely for me.

Although the weather was cold, and the ground lightly covered with snow, the earth began to vegetate: violets and primroses already made their appearance, the trees began to bud, and the evening of my arrival was distinguished by the first song of the nightingale, which was heard almost under my window, in a wood adjoining the house. After a light sleep, forgetting when I awoke my change of abode, I still thought myself in the Rue de Grenelle, when suddenly this warbling gave me a start, and I exclaimed in my transport: 'At length all my wishes are accomplished!' The first thing I did was to abandon myself to the impression of the rural objects with which I was surrounded. Instead of beginning to set things in order in my new habitation, I began by planning future walks; and there was not a path, a copse, a grove, nor a corner in the environs of my place of residence that I had not visited by the next day. The more I examined this charming retreat, the more I found it to my wishes. This solitary, rather than savage, spot transported me in idea to the end of the earth. It had striking beauties which are but seldom found near cities; and never, if suddenly transported thither, could any person have imagined himself within four leagues of Paris.

After abandoning myself for a few days to this rural delirium, I began to arrange my papers and regulate my occupations. I set apart, as I had always done, my mornings to copying and my afternoons to walking, provided with my little note-book and a pencil, for never having been able to write and think at my ease except *sub dio*, I had no inclination to depart from this method;

and I was persuaded that the Forest of Montmorency, which was almost at my door, would in future be my closet and study. I had several works begun; these I cast my eye over. My mind was sufficiently fertile in great projects, but in the bustle of the city the execution of them had gone on but slowly. I proposed to myself to use more diligence when I should be less interrupted. I am of opinion that I have fairly fulfilled this intention, and for a man frequently ill, often at La Chevrette, at Épinay, at Eaubonne, at the Château de Montmorency, at other times interrupted by the indolent and curious, and always employed half the day in copying, if what I produced during the six years I passed at the Hermitage and at Montmorency be considered, I am persuaded it will appear that if in this interval I lost my time it was not in idleness.

Of the different works I had upon the stocks, that which I had longest revolved in my mind, which was most to my taste, to which I would willingly have devoted my life, and which, in my opinion, was to confirm the reputation I had acquired, was my *Institutions Politiques*. I had, thirteen or fourteen years before, when at Venice, where I had an opportunity of remarking the defects of that much-vaunted government, conceived the first idea of them. Since that time my views had become much more extended by the historical study of morality. I had perceived everything to be radically connected with politics, and that, upon whatever principles these were founded, a people would never be other than the nature of their government made them; therefore the great question of the best government possible appeared to me to be reduced to this: What is the kind of government fitted to form the most virtuous, enlightened, wisest, and, in a word, best people, taking the last epithet in its most extensive meaning? I thought this question

nearly allied to, even if different from, that which follows: What government is that which, by its nature, is always in closest relation to the law? Hence, what is law? — and a series of questions of similar importance. I perceived that these led to great truths, useful to the happiness of mankind, but more especially to that of my country, wherein, in the journey I had just made to it, I had not found notions of laws and liberty sufficiently just or clear. I had thought this indirect manner of communicating these to my fellow-citizens would be least mortifying to their pride, and might obtain me forgiveness for having seen a little further than themselves.

Although I had already laboured some five or six years at the work, the progress I had made in it was not considerable. Writings of this kind require meditation, leisure, and tranquillity. I had besides written the one in question, as the expression is, *en bonne fortune*, and had not communicated my project to any person, not even to Diderot. I was afraid it would be thought too daring for the age and country in which I wrote, and that the fears of my friends would embarrass me in completing it.[1] I did not yet know, too, that it would be finished in time, and in such a manner as to appear before my decease. I wished fearlessly to give to my subject everything it required, fully persuaded that, not being of a satirical turn, and never wishing to be personal, I should in equity always be judged irreprehensible. I undoubtedly wished fully to enjoy the right of thinking which I

[1] It was more especially the wise severity of Duclos which inspired me with this fear; as for Diderot, I know not by what means all my conferences with him tended to make me more satirical and bitter than my natural disposition inclined me to be. This prevented me from consulting him upon an undertaking in which I wished to introduce nothing but the force of reasoning without the least appearance of ill-humour or partiality. The manner of this work may be judged of by that of the *Contrat Social*, which is taken from it. — R.

had by birth; but still respecting the government under which I lived, without ever disobeying its laws; and, very attentive not to violate individual rights, I would not from fear renounce their advantages.

I confess even that, as a stranger, and living in France, I found the situation very favourable for one who dared to speak the truth; well knowing that continuing, as I was determined to do, not to print anything in the kingdom without permission, I was not obliged to give to any person in it an account of my maxims nor of their publication elsewhere. I should have been less independent even at Geneva, where, in whatever place my books might have been printed, the magistrate had a right to criticise their contents. This consideration had greatly contributed to make me yield to the solicitations of Madame d'Épinay, and abandon the project of fixing my residence at Geneva. I felt, as I have remarked in *Émile*, that unless an author be a man of intrigue, when he wishes to render his works really useful to any country, he must not compose them within her bounds.

What made me find my situation still more happy was my being persuaded that the government of France would, perhaps, without looking upon me with a very favourable eye, make it a point of honour to protect me, or at least not to disturb my tranquillity. It appeared to me a stroke of simple yet dexterous policy, to make a merit of tolerating that which there was no means of preventing; since, had I been driven from France, which was all authority had the right to do, my work would still have been written, and, perhaps, with less reserve; whereas, if I were left undisturbed, the author remained to answer for what he wrote, and a prejudice, deeply rooted throughout Europe, would be destroyed in acquiring the reputation of observing an enlightened respect for personal rights.

They who, by the event, shall judge I was deceived may perhaps be deceiving themselves. In the storm which has since broken over my head, my books served as a pretext, but it was against my person that they aimed. They gave themselves little concern about the author, but they wished to ruin Jean-Jacques; and the greatest evil they found in my writings was the honour they might possibly do me. Let us not encroach upon the future. I do not know that this mystery, which is still one to me, will hereafter be cleared up to my readers; I only know this, that had my avowed principles been of a nature to bring upon me the treatment I received, I should sooner have become their victim, since the work [1] in which these principles are manifested with most courage, not to call it audacity, seemed to have had its effect previous to my retreat to the Hermitage, without — I will not only say my having received the least censure, but without any steps having been taken to prevent its publication in France, where it was sold as publicly as in Holland. *La Nouvelle Héloïse* afterwards appeared with the same facility — I dare add, with the same applause; and, what seems almost incredible, the profession of faith of this same *Héloïse* at the point of death is exactly similar to that of the Savoyard Vicar. Every bold assertion in the *Contrat Social* had been before published in the *Discours sur l'Inégalité;* and every bold opinion in *Émile* had been previously stated in *Julie.* This unrestrained freedom did not excite any murmur against the two first works; therefore it was not that which gave cause to it against the latter.

Another undertaking much of the same kind, but of which the project was more recent, then especially engaged my attention: this was the extract from the works of the Abbé de Saint-Pierre, of which, having been led

[1] *Le Discours sur l'Inégalité des Conditions.*

away by the thread of my narrative, I have not hitherto been able to speak. The idea had been suggested to me, after my return from Geneva, by the Abbé de Mably, not immediately from himself, but by the interposition of Madame Dupin, who had some interest in engaging me to adopt it. She was one of the three or four pretty women of Paris of whom the old Abbé de Saint-Pierre had been the spoiled child, and, although she had not decidedly had the preference, she had at least partaken of it with Madame d'Aiguillon. She preserved for the memory of the good man a respect and an affection which did honour to them both; and her self-love would have been flattered by seeing the still-born works of her friend brought to life by her secretary. These works certainly contained excellent things, but so badly told that the reading of them was nearly insupportable; and it is astonishing that the Abbé de Saint-Pierre, who looked upon his readers as big children, should nevertheless have spoken to them as men, by the little care he took to induce them to give him a hearing. It was for this purpose that the work was proposed to me as useful in itself, and very proper for a man laborious in compilation and arrangement, but idle as an author, who, finding the trouble of thinking very fatiguing, preferred, in things which pleased him, throwing a light upon and extending the ideas of others to producing any himself. Besides, not being confined to the functions of a translator, I was at liberty sometimes to think for myself; and I had it in my power to give such a form to my work that many important truths would pass in it under the name of the Abbé de Saint-Pierre, much more safely than under mine. The undertaking also was not trifling; the business was nothing less than to read, reflect upon, and make extracts from twenty-three volumes, diffuse, confused, full of long narrations and periods, repetitions, and false or

narrow views, from amongst which it was necessary to select some few that were great and useful, and sufficiently encouraging to enable me to support the painful labour. I frequently wished to resign it, and should have done so could I have got it off my hands with a good grace: but when I received the Abbé's manuscripts, which were given me by his nephew, the Comte de Saint-Pierre, at the solicitation of Saint-Lambert, I in some measure undertook to make use of them, which I must either have done, or have given them back. It was with the former intention I had taken the manuscripts to the Hermitage, and this was the first work to which I proposed to dedicate my leisure hours.

I had likewise in my own mind projected a third, the idea of which I owed to the observations I had made upon myself, and I felt the more disposed to undertake this work as I had reason to hope I could make it a truly useful one, and perhaps the most so of any that could be offered to the world, were the execution equal to the plan I had laid down. It has been remarked that most men are in the course of their lives frequently unlike themselves, and seem to be transformed into others very different from what they were. It was not to establish a thing so generally known that I wished to write a book; I had a newer and more important object. This was to search for the causes of these variations, and, by confining my observations to those which depend on ourselves, to demonstrate in what manner it might be possible to direct them, in order to render us better and more certain of our dispositions. For it is undoubtedly more painful to an honest man to resist desires already formed, which it is his duty to subdue, than to prevent, change, or modify the same desires in their source, were he capable of tracing them to it. A man under temptation resists at one time because he has strength of mind; he

yields at another because he is weak; had he been the same as before he would again have triumphed.

By examining within myself, and searching in others what could be the cause of these different manners of being, I discovered that, in a great measure, they depended on the anterior impression of external objects; and that, continually modified by our senses and organs, we, without knowing it, bore in our ideas, sentiments, and even actions, the effect of these modifications. The striking and numerous observations I had collected were beyond all dispute, and by their natural principle seemed proper to furnish an exterior regimen, which, varied according to circumstances, might place and support the mind in the state most favourable to virtue. From how many mistakes would reason be preserved, how many vices would be stifled in their birth, were it possible to force animal economy to favour moral order, which it so frequently disturbs! Climates, seasons, sounds, colours, light, darkness, the elements, food, noise, silence, motion, rest, all act on the animal machine, and consequently on the mind; all offer us a thousand means, almost certain of directing in their origin the sentiments by which we suffer ourselves to be governed. Such was the fundamental idea of which I had already made a sketch upon paper, and whence I hoped for an effect the more certain, in favour of persons naturally well disposed, who, sincerely loving virtue, were afraid of their own weakness, as it appeared to me easy to make of it a book as agreeable to read as it was to compose. I have, however, applied myself but very little to this work, the title of which was *La Morale Sensitive; ou, le Matérialisme du Sage.* Interruptions, the cause of which will soon appear, prevented me from continuing it, and the fate of the sketch, which is more connected with my own than it may appear to be, will hereafter be seen.

Beyond this, I had for some time meditated a system of education, of which Madame de Chenonceaux, alarmed for her son by that of her husband, had desired me to consider. The authority of friendship placed this object, although less in itself to my taste, nearer to my heart than any other, on which account this subject, of all those of which I have just spoken, is the only one I carried to its utmost extent. The end I proposed to myself in treating of it should, I think, have procured the author a better fate. But I will not here anticipate this melancholy subject. I shall have too much reason to speak of it in the course of my work.

These different objects offered me subjects of meditation for my walks; for, as I believe I have already observed, I can only reflect when walking: the moment I stop, I think no more; my head and feet must work together. I had, however, provided myself with a work for the closet upon rainy days. This was my *Dictionnaire de Musique*, which my scattered, mutilated, and unshapen materials made it necessary to rewrite almost entirely. I had with me some books necessary to this purpose; I had spent two months in making extracts from others, which I had borrowed from the Bibliothèque du Roi, whence I was permitted to take several to the Hermitage. I was thus provided with materials for composing in my apartment when the weather did not permit me to go out, and my copying fatigued me. This arrangement was so convenient that I made it turn to advantage as well at the Hermitage as at Montmorency, and afterwards even at Motiers, where I completed the work whilst I was engaged on others, and constantly found a change of occupation to be a real relaxation.

During a considerable time I exactly followed the distribution I had prescribed myself, and found it very agreeable; but as soon as the fine weather brought

Madame d'Épinay more frequently to Épinay, or to La Chevrette, I found that attentions in the first instance natural to me, but which I had not considered in my scheme, seriously deranged my projects. I have already observed that Madame d'Épinay had many amiable qualities; she sincerely loved her friends, served them with zeal, and, not sparing for them either time or pains, certainly deserved on their part every attention in return. I had hitherto discharged this duty without considering it as one; but at length I found that I had given myself a chain of which nothing but friendship prevented me from feeling the weight, and this was aggravated by my dislike to numerous societies. Madame d'Épinay took advantage of these circumstances to make a proposition seemingly agreeable to me, but which was more so to herself; this was to let me know when she was alone, or had but little company. I consented, without perceiving to what a degree I engaged myself. The consequence was that I no longer visited her at my own hour but at hers, and that I never was certain of being master of myself for a day together. This constraint considerably diminished the pleasure I had in going to see her. I found the liberty she had so earnestly promised was given me upon no other condition than that of my never enjoying it; and once or twice when I wished to do this there were so many messages, notes, and alarms relative to my health, that I perceived I could have no excuse but being confined to my bed for not immediately running to her upon the first intimation. It was necessary I should submit to this yoke, and I did it, even more voluntarily than could be expected from so great an enemy to dependence: the sincere attachment I had to Madame d'Épinay preventing me, in a great measure, from feeling the inconvenience with which it was accompanied. She thus filled up, well or ill, the void which the absence

of her usual circle left in her amusements. This for her was but a very slender supplement, although preferable to absolute solitude, which she could not support. She had nevertheless the means of doing it much more readily since she had begun to dabble in literature, and had taken it into her head to write at random novels, letters, comedies, tales, and other trash of the same kind. But she was not so much amused in writing these as in reading them; and she never scribbled over two or three pages at one sitting without being previously assured of having at least two or three benevolent auditors at the end of so much labour. I seldom had the honour of being one of the chosen few, except by favour of another. When alone, I was, for the most part, considered as a cipher in everything; and this not only in the company of Madame d'Épinay, but in that of Monsieur d'Holbach, and in every place where Grimm gave the tone. This nullity was very convenient to me, except in a *tête-à-tête*, when I knew not what countenance to put on, not daring to speak of literature, of which it was not for me to say a word; nor of gallantry, being too timid, and fearing more than death the ridicule due to an old gallant; besides that I never had such an idea when in the company of Madame d'Épinay, and that it would perhaps never have occurred to me, had I passed my whole life with her: not that her person was in the least disagreeable to me; on the contrary, I loved her perhaps too much as a friend to do it as a lover. I felt a pleasure in seeing and speaking to her. Her conversation, although agreeable enough in a mixed company, was uninteresting in private; mine, not more florid than her own, was no great amusement to her. Ashamed of being long silent, I endeavoured to enliven the interview; and, although this frequently fatigued me, I never felt bored by it. I was happy to show her little attentions, and gave her little fraternal

kisses, which seemed not to be more sensual to herself; these were all. She was very thin, very pale, and had a bosom as flat as my hand. This defect alone would have been sufficient to cool my desires; neither my heart nor my senses could ever regard as a woman a female without breasts; besides, other causes useless to mention always made me forget the sex of this lady.

Having resolved to conform to a subservience which was necessary, I immediately and voluntarily did so, and for the first year at least found it less burdensome than I could have expected. Madame d'Épinay, who commonly passed almost the whole summer in the country, continued there but a part of this; whether she was more detained by her affairs at Paris, or that the absence of Grimm rendered the residence of La Chevrette less agreeable to her, I know not. I took the advantage of the intervals of her absence, or when the company with her was numerous, to enjoy my solitude with my good Thérèse and her mother, in such a manner as to taste all its charms. Although I had for several years past been frequently in the country, I seldom had enjoyed much of its pleasures; and those excursions, always made in company with people who considered themselves as persons of consequence, and rendered insipid by constraint, served to increase in me the natural desire I had for rustic pleasures. The want of these was the more sensible to me as I had the image of them immediately before my eyes. I was so tired of saloons, fountains, groves, parterres, and of the more tiresome persons by whom they were shown; so exhausted with pamphlets, harpsichords, cards, unravellings of plots, stupid bons-mots, insipid affectations, pitiful story-tellers, and great suppers, that when I gave a side-glance at a poor simple hawthorn bush, a hedge, a barn, or a meadow, when in passing through a hamlet I scented a good chervil omelette, and

heard at a distance the burden of the rustic song of the Bisquières, I wished all rouge, furbelows, and amber at the devil, and envying the dinner of the good housewife, and the wine of her own vineyard, I heartily wished to give a slap on the chaps to monsieur le chef and monsieur le maître, who made me dine at the hour of supper, and sup when I should have been asleep, but especially to messieurs the lackeys, who devoured with their eyes the morsel I put into my mouth, and upon pain of my dying with thirst sold me the adulterated wine of their master, ten times dearer than that of a better quality would have cost me at a tavern.

Behold me then at length at home, in an agreeable and solitary asylum, at liberty to pass there the remainder of my days, in that peaceful, equal, and independent life for which I felt myself born. Before I relate the effects which this situation, so new to me, had upon my heart, it is proper that I should recapitulate its secret affections, that the reader may better follow in their causes the progress of these new modifications.

I have always considered the day on which I was united to Thérèse as that which fixed my moral existence. An attachment was necessary for me, since that which should have sufficed me had been so cruelly broken. The thirst after happiness is never extinguished in the heart of man. Mamma was advancing into years, and dishonoured herself! I had proofs that she could never more be happy here below; it therefore remained for me to seek my own happiness, having lost all hopes of sharing hers. I was sometimes irresolute, and fluctuated from one idea to another, and from project to project. My journey to Venice would have thrown me into public life, had the man with whom I was unluckily connected had common sense. I was easily discouraged, especially in undertakings of length and difficulty. The ill success of this dis-

gusted me with every other; and, according to my old maxims, considering distant objects as deceitful allurements, I resolved thenceforth to live only from day to day, seeing nothing in life which could tempt me to make extraordinary efforts.

It was precisely at this time that we became acquainted. The mild character of this good girl seemed so fitted to my own that I united myself to her with an attachment which neither time nor injuries have been able to impair, and which has constantly been increased by whatever might have been expected to sever it. The force of this sentiment will hereafter appear when I come to speak of the grievous wounds she has given my heart in the depth of my misery, without my having, up to the moment when I write this, ever uttered one word of complaint to any person.

When it shall be known that, after having done everything, braved everything, to avoid separation from her, that after passing with her twenty-five years, in despite of fate and men, I have in my old age made her my wife, without the least expectation or solicitation on her part, or promise or engagement on mine, the world will think that love bordering upon madness, having from the first moment turned my head, led me by degrees to the last act of extravagance; and this will be the more strongly believed when the urgent and particular reasons which should for ever have prevented me taking such a step are made known. What, therefore, will the reader think when I shall have told him, with all the truth with which he ought now to credit me, that, from the first moment in which I saw her until this day, I have never felt the least spark of love for her, that I never desired to possess her more than I did to possess Madame de Warens, and that the physical wants which were satisfied with her person, were for me, solely those of the sex, and by no

means proper to the individual? He will think that, being of a constitution different from that of other men, I was incapable of love, since this was not one of the sentiments which attached me to women the most dear to my heart. Patience, my dear reader! the fatal moment approaches in which you will be but too much undeceived.

I fall into repetitions; I know it; it must be so. The first of my wants, the greatest, strongest, and most inextinguishable, was wholly in my heart — the want of an intimate connection, and as intimate as it could possibly be. For this reason especially a woman was more necessary to me than a man, a female rather than a male friend. This singular want was such that the closest corporal union was not sufficient: two souls would have been necessary to me in the same body, without which I always felt a void. I thought I was upon the point of ceasing to feel it. This young person, amiable by a thousand excellent qualities, and at that time by her form, without the shadow of art or coquetry, would have confined within herself my whole existence, could hers, as I had hoped it would, have been totally confined to me. I had nothing to fear from men; I am certain of being the only man she ever really loved, and her moderate passions seldom wanted another, not even after I ceased in this respect to be one to her. I had no family: she had one; and this family composed of individuals whose dispositions were so different from hers, I could never make my own. This was the first cause of my unhappiness. What would I not have given to have been the child of her mother? I did everything in my power to become so, but could never succeed. I in vain attempted to unite all our interests: this was impossible. She always created herself one different from mine, contrary to it, and even to that of her daughter, which already was no longer separated from it.

She, her other children and grandchildren, became so many leeches, and the least evil these did to Thérèse was robbing her. The poor girl, accustomed to submit, even to her nieces, suffered herself to be pilfered and governed without saying a word; and I perceived with grief that by exhausting my purse, and giving her advice, I did nothing that could be of any real advantage to her. I endeavoured to detach her from her mother, but she constantly resisted such a proposal. I respected her resistance, and esteemed her the more for it; but her refusal was not on this account less to the prejudice of us both. Abandoned to her mother and the rest of her family, she belonged to them rather than to me — rather, indeed, than to herself. Their greed was less ruinous than their advice was pernicious to her; in fact, if, on account of the love she had for me, added to her good natural disposition, she was not quite their slave, she was enough so to hinder in a great measure the effect of the good maxims I endeavoured to instil into her; this was a sufficient cause, notwithstanding all my efforts, to prevent our being ever truly united.

Thus was it that, notwithstanding a sincere and reciprocal attachment, in which I had lavished all the tenderness of my heart, the void in that heart was never completely filled. Children, by whom this effect should have been produced, were brought into the world, but these only made things worse. I trembled at the thought of intrusting them to this ill-bred family, to be still worse educated. The risk of the education of the Enfants-Trouvés was much less. This reason for the resolution I took, much stronger than all those I stated in my letter to Madame de Francueil, was, however, the only one with which I dared not make her acquainted; I chose rather to appear less excusable than expose to reproach the family of a person I loved. But by the conduct of

her wretched brother, notwithstanding all that can be said in his defence, it will be judged whether I ought to have exposed my children to an education similar to his.

Not having it in my power to taste in all its plenitude the charms of that intimate connection of which I felt the want, I sought for substitutes, which did not fill up the void, though they made it less sensible. Not having a friend entirely devoted to me, I wanted others whose impulse should overcome my indolence. For this reason I cultivated and strengthened my relations with Diderot and the Abbé de Condillac, formed with Grimm a new one still more intimate, till at length, by the unfortunate Discourse of which I have related some particulars, I unexpectedly found myself thrown back into literature, which I thought I had quitted for ever.

My first steps conducted me by a new path to another intellectual world, the simple and noble economy of which I cannot contemplate without enthusiasm. I reflected so much on the subject that I soon saw nothing but error and folly in the doctrine of our sages, and oppression and misery in our social order. In the illusion of my foolish pride I thought myself capable of destroying all imposture; and thinking that, to make myself listened to, it was necessary that my conduct should agree with my principles, I adopted the singular manner of life which I have not been permitted to continue, the example of which my pretended friends have never forgiven me, which at first made me ridiculous, and would at length have rendered me worthy of respect, had it been possible for me to persevere.

Until then I had been good; from that moment I became virtuous, or at least infatuated with virtue. This infatuation had begun in my head, but afterwards passed into my heart. The most noble pride there took root amongst the ruins of extirpated vanity. I affected noth-

ing: I became what I appeared to be; and during four years at least, whilst this effervescence continued at its greatest height, there is nothing great and good that can enter the heart of man of which I was not capable between heaven and myself. Hence flowed my sudden eloquence; hence, in my first writings, that fire really celestial which consumed me, and whence during forty years not a single spark had escaped, because it was not yet lighted up.

I was really transformed; my friends and acquaintance scarcely knew me. I was no longer that timid and rather bashful than modest man who neither dared to present himself nor utter a word, whom a single pleasantry disconcerted, and who blushed at the glance of a woman's eyes. I became bold, haughty, intrepid, with a confidence the more firm as it was simple, which resided in my soul rather than in my manner. The contempt with which my profound meditations had inspired me for the manners, maxims, and prejudices of the age in which I lived rendered me proof against the raillery of those by whom they were possessed, and I crushed their little pleasantries with a sentence, as I would have crushed an insect in my fingers. What a change! All Paris repeated the severe and acute sarcasms of the same man who, two years before and ten years afterwards, knew not how to find what he had to say, nor the word he ought to employ. Let the situation in the world the most contrary to my natural disposition be sought after, and this will be found. Let one of the short moments of my life in which I became another man, and ceased to be myself, be recollected — this also will be found in the time of which I speak; but, instead of continuing only six days, or six weeks, it lasted almost six years, and would perhaps still continue but for the particular circumstances which caused it to cease, and restored me to nature, above which I had wished to soar.

The beginning of this change took place as soon as I had quitted Paris, and the sight of the vices of that city no longer fed the indignation with which it had inspired me. I no sooner had lost sight of men than I ceased to despise them; when I no longer beheld the wicked, I ceased to hate them. My heart, little fitted for hatred, pitied their misery, and even their wickedness. This situation, more pleasing but less sublime, soon allayed the ardent enthusiasm by which I had so long been transported, and I insensibly, almost to myself even, again became fearful, complaisant, and timid — in a word, the same Jean-Jacques I before had been.

Had this revolution gone no further than restoring me to myself, all would have been well; but, unfortunately, it rapidly carried me away to the other extreme. From that moment my mind in agitation passed the line of repose, and its oscillations, continually renewed, have never permitted it to remain here. I must enter into some detail of this second revolution — terrible and fatal era of a lot unparalleled amongst mortals.

We were but three persons in our retirement; it was therefore natural that our intimacy should be increased by leisure and solitude. This was the case between Thérèse and myself. We passed together in the shade the most charming and delightful hours, more so than any I had hitherto enjoyed. She seemed to taste of this sweet intercourse more than I had until then observed her to do; she opened her heart and communicated to me relative to her mother and family things she had had resolution enough to conceal for a great length of time. Both had received from Madame Dupin numerous presents, bestowed on my account, and intended for me, but which the cunning old woman, to prevent my being angry, had appropriated to her own use and that of her other children, without suffering Thérèse to have the least share, strongly

forbidding her to say a word to me of the matter — an order which the poor girl had obeyed with an incredible exactness.

But another thing which surprised me much more than this was the discovery that, besides the private conversations that Diderot and Grimm had frequently had with both to endeavour to detach them from me, in which, owing to the resistance of Thérèse, they had not been able to succeed, they had afterwards had frequent secret conferences with the mother, the daughter being quite ignorant of what was brewing between them. However, she knew little presents had been made, and that there were mysterious goings and comings, the motive of which was entirely unknown to her. When we left Paris, Madame Le Vasseur had long been in the habit of going to see Grimm twice or thrice a month, and continuing with him for hours together, in conversation so secret that the servant was always sent out of the room.

I judged this motive to be of the same nature with the project into which they had attempted to make the daughter enter, by promising to procure her and her mother, by means of Madame d'Épinay, a salt-huckster's licence, or a snuff-shop; in a word, by tempting her with the allurements of gain. They had been told that, as I was not in a situation to do anything for them, I could not, on their account, do anything for myself. As in all this I saw nothing but good intentions, I was not absolutely displeased with them for it. The mystery was the only thing which gave me pain, especially on the part of the old woman, who, moreover, daily became more parasitical and flattering towards me. This, however, did not prevent her from reproaching her daughter in private with telling me everything, and loving me too much, observing that she was a fool, and would at length be made a dupe.

This woman possessed, to a supreme degree, the art of multiplying the presents made her, by concealing from one what she received from another, and from me what she received from all. I could have pardoned her avarice, but it was impossible I should forgive her dissimulation. What could she have to conceal from me, whose happiness she knew principally consisted in that of herself and her daughter? What I had done for the daughter I had done for myself, but the services I rendered her mother merited, on her part, some acknowledgment. She ought, at least, to have thought herself obliged for them to her daughter, and to have loved me for the sake of her by whom I was already beloved. I had raised her from the lowest state of wretchedness; she received from my hands the means of subsistence, and was indebted to me for her acquaintance with the persons from whom she reaped so much benefit. Thérèse had long supported her by her industry, and now maintained her with my bread. She owed everything to this daughter, for whom she had done nothing; and her other children, to whom she had given marriage portions, and on whose account she had ruined herself, far from giving her the least aid, devoured her substance and mine. I thought that, in such a situation, she ought to consider me as her only friend and most sure protector, and that, far from making of my own affairs a secret to me, and conspiring against me in my own house, it was her duty faithfully to acquaint me with everything in which I was interested, when this came to her knowledge before it did to mine. In what light, therefore, could I consider her false and mysterious conduct? What could I think of the sentiments with which she endeavoured to inspire her daughter? What monstrous ingratitude was this, to endeavour to instil it into her!

These reflections at length alienated my affections from this woman to such a degree that I could no longer

look upon her but with contempt. I, nevertheless, continued to treat with respect the mother of my dear companion, and in everything to show her almost the reverence of a son; but I must confess I could not remain long with her without pain, and that I never knew how to bear constraint.

This is another short moment of my life in which I approached near to happiness without being able to attain it, and this by no fault of my own. Had this woman been of a good disposition, we all three should have been happy to the end of our days: the longest liver only would have been to be pitied. Instead of which, the reader will see the course things took, and judge whether or not it was in my power to change it.

Madame Le Vasseur, who perceived I had got entire possession of the heart of her daughter, and that she had lost ground with her, endeavoured to regain it; and, instead of striving to restore herself to my good opinion through her, attempted to alienate her altogether from me. One of the means she employed was to call her family to her aid. I had begged Thérèse not to invite any of them to the Hermitage, and she had promised me she would not. They were sent for in my absence, without consulting her, and she was afterwards prevailed upon to promise not to say anything of the matter. After the first step was taken all the rest were easy. When once we make a secret of anything to the person we love, we soon make little scruple of doing it in everything. The moment I was at La Chevrette the Hermitage was full of people, who sufficiently amused themselves. A mother has always great power over a daughter of a mild disposition; yet, notwithstanding all the old woman could do, she was never able to prevail upon Thérèse to enter into her views, nor to persuade her to join the league against me. For her part, she resolved upon doing it for

ever; and seeing on one side her daughter and myself, who were in a situation to live, and that was all; on the other Diderot, Grimm, d'Holbach, and Madame d'Épinay, who promised great things, and gave some little ones, she could not conceive it was possible to be in the wrong with the wife of a farmer-general and of a baron. Had I been more clear-sighted, I should, from this moment, have perceived that I nourished a serpent in my bosom. But my blind confidence, which nothing had yet diminished, was such that I could not imagine how one could wish to injure the person one ought to love. Though I saw numerous conspiracies forming on every side, all I complained of was the tyranny of persons who called themselves my friends, and who, as it seemed, would force me to be happy in their way, and not in mine.

Although Thérèse refused to join in the confederacy with her mother, she afterwards kept the secret. For this her motive was commendable; I will not determine whether she did well or ill. Two women who have secrets between them love to prattle together: this attracted them towards each other, and Thérèse, by dividing herself, sometimes let me feel I was alone, for I could no longer consider as a society that which we all three formed. I now felt the neglect I had been guilty of during the first years of our connection in not taking advantage of the docility with which her love inspired her to improve her talents and give her knowledge, which, by more closely connecting us in our retirement, would agreeably have filled up her time and my own, without once suffering us to perceive the length of a private conversation. Not that this was ever exhausted between us, or that she showed weariness or lack of interest during our walks; but we had not a sufficient number of ideas common to both to make ourselves a great store, and we could not incessantly talk of our future projects, which

were confined to those of enjoying the pleasures of life. The objects around us inspired me with reflections beyond the reach of her comprehension. An attachment of twelve years' standing had no longer need for words; we were too well acquainted with each other to have any new knowledge to acquire in that respect. The resource of puns, jests, gossiping, and scandal was all that remained. In solitude especially is it that the advantage of living with a person who knows how to think is particularly felt. I wanted not this resource to amuse myself with her; but she would have stood in need of it to have always found amusement with me. The worst of all was our being obliged to hold our conversations when we could: her mother, who became importunate, obliged me to watch for opportunities to do it. I was under constraint in my own house: this is saying everything; the air of love was prejudicial to good friendship. We had an intimate intercourse without living in intimacy.

The moment I thought I perceived that Thérèse sometimes sought for a pretext to elude the walks I proposed to her I ceased to invite her to accompany me, without being displeased with her for not finding in them so much amusement as I did. Pleasure is not a thing which depends upon the will. I was sure of her heart, and that was all I desired. As long as my pleasures were hers, I tasted of them with her: when this ceased to be the case, I preferred her contentment to my own.

In this manner it was that, half deceived in my expectation, leading a life after my own heart, in a residence I had chosen with a person who was dear to me, I at length found myself almost alone. What I still wanted prevented me from enjoying what I had. With respect to happiness and enjoyment, everything or nothing was what was necessary to me. The reason of these observa-

tions will hereafter appear. At present I return to the thread of my narrative.

I imagined that I possessed treasures in the manuscripts given me by the Comte de Saint-Pierre. On examination, I found they were little more than the collection of the printed works of his uncle, with notes and corrections by his own hand, and a few other trifling fragments, which had not yet been published. I confirmed myself, by these moral writings, in the idea I had conceived from some of his letters, shown me by Madame de Créqui, that he had a better understanding than at first I had imagined; but, after a careful examination of his political works, I discerned nothing but superficial notions, and projects that were useful but impracticable, in consequence of the idea from which the author never could depart, that men conducted themselves by their enlightenment rather than by their passions. The high opinion he had of the knowledge of the moderns had made him adopt this false principle of perfected reason, the basis of all the institutions he proposed, and the source of his political sophisms. This extraordinary man — an honour to the age in which he lived, and to the human species, and perhaps the only person since the creation of mankind whose sole passion was devotion to reason — wandered nevertheless, in all his systems, from error to error, by attempting to make men like himself, instead of taking them as they were, are, and will continue to be. He laboured for imaginary beings, while he thought himself employed for the benefit of his contemporaries.

All these things considered, I was rather embarrassed as to the form I should give to my work. To suffer the author's visions to pass was doing nothing useful; fully to refute them would have been impolite, as the charge of his manuscripts, which I had accepted, and even requested, imposed on me the obligations of treating the

author honourably. I at length concluded upon that which to me appeared the most decent, judicious, and useful. This was to give separately my own ideas and those of the author, and, for this purpose, to enter into his views, to set them in the best light, to amplify and extend them, and spare nothing which might contribute to present them in all their excellence.

My work, therefore, was to be composed of two parts absolutely distinct: one, to explain, in the manner I have just mentioned, the different projects of the author; in the other, which was not to appear until the first had had its effect, I should have given my opinion upon these projects, which I confess might have sometimes exposed them to the fate of the sonnet in *Le Misanthrope*. At the head of the whole was to have been the life of the author, for which I had collected some good materials, and I flattered myself that I should not spoil them in the task. I had seen a little of the Abbé de Saint-Pierre in his old age, and the veneration I had for his memory warranted me, upon the whole, that the Comte would not be dissatisfied with the manner in which I should treat his relation.

I made my first essay on *La Paix Perpétuelle*, the greatest and most elaborate of all the works which composed the collection; and before I abandoned myself to my reflections I had the courage to read everything the abbé had written upon this fine subject without once suffering myself to be repelled either by his long periods or repetitions. The public have seen the extract, on which account I have no more to say. My opinion of it has no been printed, nor do I know that it ever will be; however, it was written at the time the extract was made. From this I passed to *La Polysynodie*, or plurality of councils, a work written under the Regent to favour the administration he had chosen, and which caused the

Abbé de Saint-Pierre to be expelled from the Academy on account of some remarks, unfavourable to the preceding administration, with which the Duchesse du Maine and Cardinal de Polignac were irritated. I completed this work, as I did the former, with an extract and remarks; but I stopped here without desiring to continue the undertaking, which I ought never to have begun.

The reflection which induced me to give it up naturally presents itself, and it was astonishing I had not made it sooner. Most of the writings of the Abbé de Saint-Pierre were either observations, or contained observations, on certain parts of the government of France; and several of these were of so free a nature that it was happy for him he had made them with impunity. But in the offices of the ministers of state the Abbé de Saint-Pierre had ever been considered as a kind of preacher rather than a real politician, and he was suffered to say what he pleased, because it seemed clear that nobody listened to him. Had I procured him readers the case would have been different. He was a Frenchman, and I was not one; and by repeating his censures, although in his own name, I exposed myself to be asked, rather rudely, but without injustice, what I meddled with. Happily, before proceeding any further I perceived the hold I was about to give the government against me, and I immediately withdrew. I knew that, living alone in the midst of men, and men more powerful than myself, I never could by any means whatever be sheltered from the injury they might choose to do me. There was but one thing which depended on my own efforts: this was to observe such a line of conduct that whenever they chose to injure me they could not do it without being unjust. This maxim, which induced me to abandon the Abbé de Saint-Pierre, has frequently made me give up projects that I had much more at heart. These folk, who are always ready to construe

adversity into a crime, would be much surprised were they to know the pains I have taken during my life that in my misfortunes it might never with truth be said of me: 'Thou hast well deserved them.'

This task abandoned, I remained some time uncertain as to the work which should succeed it, and this interval of inactivity was destructive by permitting me to turn my reflections on myself, for want of another object to engage my attention. I had no project for the future which could amuse my imagination. It was not even possible to form any, as my situation was precisely that in which all my desires were united. I had not another to conceive, and yet there was a void in my heart. This state was the more cruel, as I saw no other which was to be preferred to it. I had concentrated my most tender affections upon a person after my own heart, who made me a complete return of her own.

I lived with her without constraint, and, so to speak, at discretion. Notwithstanding this, a secret grief of mind never quitted me for a moment, either when she was present or absent. In possessing Thérèse, I still perceived that happiness was incomplete; and the sole idea of my not being everything to her had such an effect upon my mind that she was next to nothing to me.

I had friends of both sexes, to whom I was attached by the purest friendship and most perfect esteem. I depended upon a real return on their part, and a doubt of their sincerity never entered my mind; yet this friendship was more tormenting than agreeable to me by their obstinate perseverance, and even their affectation in opposing my tastes, inclinations, and manner of living; and this to such a degree, that the moment I seemed to desire a thing which interested myself only, and depended not upon them, they immediately joined their efforts to oblige me to renounce it. This continued desire to con-

trol me in all my wishes — the more unjust as I did not so much as make myself acquainted with theirs — became so cruelly oppressive that at length I never received one of their letters without feeling, as I opened it, a certain terror which was but too well justified by the contents. I thought being treated as a child by persons younger than myself, and who themselves stood in great need of the advice they so prodigally bestowed on me, was too much. 'Love me,' said I to them, 'as I love you, but beyond this meddle no farther in my affairs than I do in yours; this is all I ask.' If they granted me one of these two requests, it was not the latter.

I had a retired residence in a charming solitude, was master of my own house, and could live in it in the manner I thought proper without being controlled by any person; yet this habitation imposed on me duties agreeable to discharge, but indispensable. All my liberty was but precarious; in a greater state of subjection than a person at the command of another, it was my duty to be so by inclination. When I arose in the morning I never could say to myself, I will employ this day as I think proper. And, moreover, besides my being subject to obey the call of Madame d'Épinay, I was exposed to the still more disagreeable importunities of the public and chance comers. The distance from Paris did not prevent groups of idlers, not knowing how to spend their time, from daily breaking in upon me, and without the least scruple freely disposing of mine. When I least expected visitors I was unmercifully assailed by them, and I seldom made a plan for the agreeable employment of the day that was not overturned by the arrival of some person.

In short, finding no real enjoyment in the midst of the pleasures I had been most desirous to obtain, I, by sudden mental transitions, returned in imagination to the serene

days of my youth, and sometimes exclaimed with a sigh: 'Ah! this is not Les Charmettes!'

The recollection of the different periods of my life led me to reflect upon that at which I was arrived, and I found myself already on the decline, a prey to painful disorders, and imagined I was approaching the end of my days, without having tasted, in all its plenitude, scarcely one of the pleasures after which my heart had so much thirsted, or given scope to the lively sentiments that I felt I had in reserve. I had not savoured even that intoxicating voluptuousness with which my mind was richly stored, and which, for want of an object, was always compressed and never exhaled but by sighs.

How was it possible that, with a mind naturally expansive, I, to whom life meant love, should not hitherto have found a friend entirely devoted to me, a real friend — I who felt myself so capable of being such? How can it be accounted for, that with such inflammable senses, and a heart wholly made up of love, I had not once, at least, felt its flame for a determinate object? Tormented by the want of loving, without ever having been able to satisfy it, I perceived myself approaching the portal of old age, and hastening to death without having lived.

These melancholy but affecting recollections led me to study myself with a regret that was not wholly displeasing. I thought something I had not yet received was still due to me from destiny. To what end was I born with exquisite faculties, which are yet suffered to remain unemployed? The sentiment of conscious merit, which made me feel this injustice, was some kind of reparation, and caused me to shed tears which with pleasure I suffered to flow.

These were my meditations during the finest season of the year, in the month of June, in cool shades, to the

song of the nightingale and the rippling of brooks. Everything concurred in plunging me into that too seducing state of indolence for which I was born, but from which my austere manner, proceeding from a long effervescence, should for ever have delivered me. I unfortunately recollected the dinner of the Château de Toune, and my meeting with those two charming girls in the same season, in places much resembling that in which I then was. The remembrance of these circumstances, which the innocence that accompanied them rendered still more dear to me, brought several others of the nature to my recollection. I presently saw myself surrounded by all the objects which, in my youth, had given me emotion: Mademoiselle Galley, Mademoiselle de Graffenried, Mademoiselle de Breil, Madame Bazile, Madame de Larnage, my pretty scholars, and even the bewitching Zulietta, whom my heart cannot forget. I found myself in the midst of a seraglio of houris of my old acquaintance, for whom the most lively inclination was not new to me. My blood became inflamed, my head turned, notwithstanding my hair was growing grey; and behold the grave citizen of Geneva, the austere Jean-Jacques, at forty-five years of age, again become the fond shepherd. The intoxication with which my mind was seized, although sudden and extravagant, was so strong and lasting, that no less potent remedy could cure me than the unforeseen and terrible crisis of misfortune into which it cast me.

This intoxication, to whatever degree it was carried, went not so far as to make me forget my age and situation, to flatter me that I could still inspire love, nor to make me attempt to communicate the devouring but sterile flame by which ever since my youth I had felt my heart in vain consumed. For this I did not hope; I did not even desire it. I knew the season of love was past; I

knew too well the ridicule in which superannuated gallants are held ever to add one to the number, and I was not a man to become a confident coxcomb in the decline of life, after having been so different during the flower of my age. Besides, as a friend to peace, I should have been apprehensive of domestic dissensions; and I too sincerely loved my Thérèse to expose her to the mortification of seeing me entertain for others more lively sentiments than those with which she inspired me for herself.

What step did I take upon this occasion? My reader will already have guessed it, if he has followed me ever so carelessly to this point. The impossibility of attaining real beings threw me into the regions of chimera, and seeing nothing in existence worthy of my delirium, I sought food for it in the ideal world, which my creative imagination quickly peopled with beings after my own heart. This resource never came at a happier moment, nor was it ever so fertile. In my continual ecstasies I intoxicated my mind with the most delicious sentiments that ever entered the heart of man. Entirely forgetting the human species, I formed to myself societies of perfect beings, whose virtues were as celestial as their beauty — tender and faithful friends, such as I never found here below. I became so fond of soaring thus in the empyrean, in the midst of the charming objects with which I was surrounded, that I there passed hours and days without perceiving it; and, losing the remembrance of all other things, I scarcely had eaten a morsel in haste before I was impatient to make my escape and run to regain my groves. When, ready to depart for the enchanted world, I saw the approach of wretched mortals who came to detain me upon earth, I could neither conceal nor moderate my vexation; and, no longer master of myself, I gave them so uncivil a reception that it might be termed brutal. This tended to confirm my reputation as a mis-

anthrope, from the very cause which, could the world have read my heart, should have acquired me one of a nature directly opposite.

In the midst of my utmost exaltation I was pulled down like a paper kite, and restored to my proper place, by means of a smart attack of my disorder. I recurred to the only means that had before given me relief, and thus made a truce with my angelic amours; for, besides that it seldom happens that a man is amorous when he suffers, my imagination, which is animated in the country and beneath the shade of trees, languishes and expires in a chamber and under the joists of a ceiling. I have frequently regretted that there exist no Dryads; it would certainly have been amongst these that I should have fixed my attachment.

Other domestic broils came at the same time to increase my chagrin. Madame Le Vasseur, while making me the finest compliments in the world, alienated her daughter from me as much as she could. I received letters from my late neighbourhood, informing me that the good old lady had secretly contracted several debts in the name of Thérèse, to whom the matter became known, but of which she had never said a word. The debts to be paid hurt me much less than the secret that had been made of them. How could she, with whom I had never had a secret, be secret with me? Is it possible to dissimulate with persons whom we love? The Coterie Holbachique, who found that I never made a journey to Paris, began seriously to be afraid that I was happy and satisfied in the country, and madman enough to remain there. Hence the cabals by which attempts were made to recall me indirectly to the city. Diderot, who did not wish to show himself immediately, began by detaching from me Deleyre, whom I had introduced to him, and who received and transmitted to me the impressions that

Diderot chose to give, without suspecting to what end they were directed.

Everything seemed to concur in withdrawing me from my charming and mad reverie. I had not recovered from my late attack when I received a copy of the poem on the destruction of Lisbon, which I imagined to be sent by the author. This made it necessary that I should write to him and speak of his composition. I did so, and my letter was a long time afterwards printed without my consent, as I shall hereafter have occasion to remark.

Struck by seeing this poor man, overwhelmed, if I may so speak, with prosperity and honour, bitterly exclaiming against the miseries of this life, and finding everything to be wrong, I formed the insensate project of making him look into his own heart, and of proving to him that everything was right. Voltaire, while always appearing to believe in God, never really believed in anything but the devil, since his pretended Deity is a malicious being, who, according to him, takes no pleasure but in evil. The glaring absurdity of this doctrine is particularly disgusting in a man enjoying the greatest prosperity; who, from the bosom of happiness, endeavours, by the frightful and cruel image of all the calamities from which he is exempt, to reduce his fellows to despair. I, who had a better right than he to calculate and weigh the evils of human life, impartially examined them, and proved to him that of all those evils there was not one to be attributed to Providence, and which had not its source rather in the abusive use man made of his faculties than in nature. I treated him, in this letter, with the greatest respect and delicacy possible. Yet, knowing his self-love to be extremely irritable, I did not send the letter immediately to himself, but to Dr. Tronchin, his physician and friend, with full power either to give it to him or destroy it. Voltaire informed me in a few lines that

being ill, having likewise the care of a sick person, he postponed his answer until some future day, and said not a word upon the subject. Tronchin, when he sent me the letter, inclosed in it another, in which he expressed but very little esteem for the person from whom he had received it.

I have never published, nor even shown, either of these two letters, not liking to make a parade of such little triumphs; but the originals are in my collections (A, Nos. 20 and 21). Since that time Voltaire has published the answer he promised me, but which I never received. This is none other than the novel of *Candide*, of which I cannot speak, because I have not read it.

All these interruptions ought to have radically cured me of my fantastic amours, and they were perhaps the means offered me by Heaven to prevent their destructive consequences; but my evil star prevailed, and I had scarcely begun to go out before my heart, my head, and my feet returned to the same paths. I say the same in certain respects, for my ideas, rather less exalted, remained this time upon earth, but yet were busied in making so exquisite a choice of all that was there to be found amiable of every kind that it was not much less chimerical than the imaginary world I had abandoned.

I figured to myself love and friendship, the two idols of my heart, under the most ravishing images. I pleased myself in adorning them with all the charms of the sex I had always adored. I imagined two female friends, rather than two of my own sex, because, although the example be more rare, it is also more lovable. I endowed them with different but analogous characters, with two faces, not perfectly beautiful, but according to my taste, and animated with benevolence and sensibility. I made one brown and the other fair, one lively and the other languishing, one wise and the other weak, but of so

amiable a weakness that it seemed to add a cnarm to virtue. I gave to one of the two a lover, of whom the other was a tender friend, and even something more, but I did not admit rivalry, or quarrels, or jealousy, because every painful sentiment is painful to me to imagine, and I was unwilling to tarnish this smiling picture by anything which was degrading to nature. Smitten with my two charming models, I identified myself with the lover and friend as much as it was possible to do it, but I made him young and amiable, giving him at the same time the virtues and defects which I felt in myself.

That I might place my characters in a residence proper for them, I successively passed in review the most beautiful places that I had seen in my travels, but found no grove sufficiently fresh and verdant, no landscape sufficiently striking, to please me. The valleys of Thessaly would have satisfied me had I but once seen them; but my imagination, fatigued with invention, wished for some real place which might serve it as a point to rest upon, and create in me an illusion with respect to the real existence of the inhabitants I intended to place there. I thought a good while upon the Boromean Islands, the delightful prospect of which had transported me, but I found in them too much art and ornament for my personages. However, I required a lake, and concluded by making choice of that about which my heart has never ceased to wander. I fixed upon that part of the banks of this lake where my wishes have long since placed my residence in the imaginary happiness to which fate has confined me. The native place of my poor Mamma had still for me a charm. The contrast of the situations, the richness and variety of the sites, the magnificence, the majesty of the whole, which ravishes the senses, affects the heart, and elevates the soul, determined me to give it the preference, and I placed my young pupils at Vévai. This

is what I imagined at the first sketch; the rest was not added until afterwards.

I for a long time confined myself to this vague plan, because it was sufficient to fill my imagination with agreeable objects, and my heart with sentiments that it loves to nourish. These fictions, by frequently presenting themselves, at length gained more consistence, and took in my mind a determined form. I then had an inclination to express upon paper some of the situations that fancy presented to me, and, recalling everything I had felt during my youth, this, in some measure, gave free scope to that desire of loving which I had never been able to satisfy, and by which I felt myself consumed.

I first penned a few scattered letters, without connection or sequence, and when I afterwards wished to arrange them I was often greatly embarrassed. What is scarcely credible, and yet very true, is my having written the two first parts almost wholly in this manner, without having any well-formed plan, and not foreseeing that I should one day be tempted to make it a regular work. For this reason the two parts afterwards formed, of materials not prepared for the place in which they are disposed, are seen to be filled with a kind of verbiage not found in the others.

In the midst of my reveries I had a visit from Madame d'Houdetot, the first she had ever made me, but which unfortunately was not the last, as will hereafter appear. The Comtesse d'Houdetot was the daughter of the late Monsieur de Bellegarde, a farmer-general, sister to Monsieur d'Épinay and to Messieurs de Lalive and de La Briche, both of whom have since filled the post of introducers of ambassadors. I have spoken of the acquaintance I made with her before she was married; since that event I had not seen her, except at the fêtes of La Chevrette, with Madame d'Épinay, her sister-in-law. Having

frequently passed several days with her, both at La Chevrette and Épinay, I not only always thought her very amiable, but I seemed also to perceive that she was my well-wisher. She was fond of walking with me; we were both good walkers, and the conversation between us did not flag. However, I never went to see her in Paris, although she had several times requested, and even solicited, me to do so. Her connection with Monsieur de Saint-Lambert, with whom I began to be intimate, rendered her more interesting to me, and it was to bring me some account of that friend, who was, I believe, then at Manon, that she came to see me at the Hermitage.

This visit had something of the appearance of the beginning of a romance. She lost her way. Her coachman, quitting the road, which turned, attempted to cross straight over from the mill of Clairvaux to the Hermitage. Her carriage stuck in a quagmire in the bottom of the valley, and she resolved to walk the rest of the way. Her delicate shoes were soon worn through; she sank into the dirt; her servants had the greatest difficulty in extricating her; and she at length arrived at the Hermitage in boots, making the place resound with her laughter, in which I most heartily joined. She had to change everything. Thérèse provided her with what was necessary, and I prevailed upon her to forget her dignity and partake of a rustic collation, with which she seemed highly satisfied. It was late, and her stay was short; but the interview was so mirthful that her fancy was agreeably engaged, and she seemed disposed to return. She did not, however, put this project into execution until the next year; but, alas! the delay was no protection to me.

I passed the autumn in an employment that no person would suspect me of undertaking: this was guarding

the fruit of Monsieur d'Épinay. The Hermitage was the reservoir of the waters of the park of La Chevrette; there was a garden walled round and planted with espaliers and other trees, which produced Monsieur d'Épinay more fruit than his kitchen-garden at La Chevrette, although three-fourths of it was stolen from him. That I might not be a guest entirely useless, I took upon myself the direction of the garden and the inspection of the gardener's conduct. Everything went on well until the fruit season, but as the produce became ripe I observed that it disappeared without knowing in what manner it was disposed of. The gardener assured me it was the dormice that ate up all. I declared war against them, and destroyed a great number of these animals, notwithstanding which the fruit still diminished. I watched so closely that at last I found the gardener himself to be the great dormouse. He lodged at Montmorency, whence he came in the night with his wife and children to take away the fruit he had concealed in the daytime, and which he sold in the market at Paris as publicly as though he had brought it from a garden of his own. This wretch, whom I loaded with kindness, whose children were clothed by Thérèse, and whose father, who was a beggar, I almost supported, robbed us with as much ease as effrontery, not one of the three being sufficiently vigilant to prevent him, and in a single night he emptied my cellar, as I saw in the morning. Whilst he seemed to address himself to me only, I suffered everything; but, being desirous of giving an account of the fruit, I was obliged to denounce the robber. Madame d'Épinay desired me to pay and discharge him, and look out for another. I did so. As this rascal rambled about the Hermitage every night, armed with a thick staff with an iron ferrule — rather, indeed, a big club — and accompanied by other villains like himself, to relieve the *gouverneuses*

from their fears I made his successor sleep always at the Hermitage; and, this not being sufficient to remove their apprehensions, I sent to ask Madame d'Épinay for a musket, which I kept in the gardener's chamber, with an order not to make use of it unless an attempt were made to break open the door or scale the garden walls, and to fire nothing but powder, meaning only to frighten the thieves. This was certainly the least precaution a man indisposed could take for the common safety, having to pass the winter in the midst of a wood with two timid women. I also procured a little dog to serve as a sentinel. Deleyre coming to see me about this time, I related to him my situation, and we laughed together at my military apparatus. At his return to Paris he sought to amuse Diderot with the story, and by this means the Coterie Holbachique learned that I was seriously disposed to pass the winter at the Hermitage. This perseverance, of which they had not imagined me to be capable, disconcerted them, and, until they could think of some other scheme for making my residence disagreeable to me, they sent back, by means of Diderot, the same Deleyre, who, though at first he had thought my precautions quite natural, ended by discovering that they were inconsistent with my principles and more than ridiculous, as he said in his letters, in which he overwhelmed me with pleasantries sufficiently bitter and satirical to offend me, had I been so disposed. But at that time, being full of tender and affectionate sentiments, and not susceptible of any other, I perceived in his biting sarcasms nothing more than a jest, and believed him only jocose when others would have thought him utterly extravagant.[1]

[1] I wonder now at my stupidity in not having seen, when writing the above, that the ill-humour with which the Holbachians saw me go into the country, and remain there, had regard principally to Madame Le

By my care and vigilance I guarded the garden so well, that, although there had been but little fruit that year, the produce was triple that of the preceding years. It is true I spared no pains to preserve it, and I went so far as to escort what I sent to La Chevrette and to Épinay, and to carry baskets of it myself. I recollect that the aunt and I carried one of these, which was so heavy that, sinking beneath the burden, we were obliged to rest every ten steps, and when we arrived with it we were quite wet with perspiration.

[1757.] As soon as the inclement season began to confine me to the house, I wished to return to my indolent amusements, but this I found impossible. I had everywhere the two charming female friends before my eyes; their friend, their surroundings, the country they inhabited, and the objects created or embellished for them by my imagination. I was no longer myself for a moment; my delirium never left me. After many useless efforts to banish all these fictions from my mind, they at length wholly seduced me, and my future endeavours were confined to giving them order and coherence, for the purpose of converting them into a species of novel.

My greatest embarrassment was shame in having contradicted myself so openly and fully. After the severe principles I had just so publicly asserted, after the austere maxims I had so loudly preached, and my bitter invectives against books which breathed nothing but effeminacy and love, could anything be less expected, or more extraordinary, than to see me, with my own

Vasseur, whom they had no longer in their power as a guide to their systems of imposture, so far as exact time and place were concerned. This idea, which strikes me so long after the event, perfectly explains the strangeness of their conduct, which on any other ground is inexplicable. — R.

hand, write my name in the list of authors whose books I had so harshly censured? I felt this inconsistency in all its extent. I reproached myself with it, I blushed at it and was vexed; but all this could not bring me back to reason. Completely overcome, I was at all risks obliged to submit, and to resolve to brave the 'What will the world say of it?' but reserving my right of deliberating afterwards whether or not I should show my work, for I did not yet suppose I should ever determine to publish it.

This resolution taken, I entirely abandoned myself to my reveries, and, by frequently revolving these in my mind, formed with them the kind of plan of which the execution has been seen. This was certainly the greatest advantage that could be drawn from my follies: the love of good, which has never been effaced from my heart, turned them towards useful objects, the moral of which might have produced its good effects. My voluptuous descriptions would have lost all their graces had they been devoid of the fair tints of innocence.

A weak girl is an object of pity whom love may render interesting, and who frequently is not therefore the less amiable, but who can see without indignation the manners of the age; and what is more disgusting than the pride of a faithless wife, who, openly treading under foot every duty, pretends that her husband ought to be extremely grateful for her unwillingness to suffer herself to be taken in the act? Perfect beings are not in nature, and their examples are not near enough to us. But that a young person born with a heart equally tender and virtuous, who suffers herself, when a girl, to be conquered by love, and when a woman, recovers strength of mind enough to conquer in her turn, and resume her virtue, whoever shall say that this picture taken as a whole is scandalous and useless, is a liar and a hypocrite; hearken not to him.

Besides this object of morality and conjugal chastity which is radically connected with all social order, I had in view one more secret in behalf of concord and public peace — a greater, and perhaps more important object in itself, at least as affairs stood at that moment. The storm raised by the *Encyclopédie*, far from being appeased, was at this time at its height. Two parties, exasperated against each other to the last degree of fury, soon resembled enraged wolves set on for their mutual destruction, rather than Christians and philosophers who had a reciprocal wish to enlighten and convince each other, and lead their brethren to the way of truth. Perhaps nothing more was wanting to each party than a few turbulent chiefs, who possessed a little power, to make this quarrel degenerate into a civil war; and God knows what a civil war of religion founded on each side upon the most cruel intolerance would have produced. Naturally an enemy to all party spirit, I had freely spoken to each severe truths to which they had not listened. I thought of another expedient, which, in my simplicity, appeared to me admirable: this was, to abate their reciprocal hatred by destroying their prejudices, and showing to each party the virtue and merit in the other was worthy of public esteem and the respect of mankind. This project, little remarkable for its wisdom, which supposed sincerity in man, and whereby I fell into the error with which I reproached the Abbé de Saint-Pierre, had the success that was to be expected from it: it drew together and united the parties only for the purpose of crushing me. Until experience made me discover my folly, I gave my attention to it with a zeal worthy of the motive by which I was inspired; and I imagined the two characters of Wolmar and Julie in an ecstasy which made me hope to render them both amiable, and, what is still more, by means of each other.

Satisfied with having made a rough sketch of my plan, I returned to the situations in detail which I had marked out, and from the arrangement I gave them resulted the first two parts of the *Julie*, which I finished during the winter with inexpressible pleasure, procuring gilt paper to receive a fair copy of them, azure and silver powder to dry the writing, and narrow blue ribbon to tack my sheets together; in a word, I thought nothing sufficiently elegant and delicate for my two charming girls, of whom, like another Pygmalion, I became madly enamoured. Every evening, by the fireside, I read the two parts to the *gouverneuses*. The daughter, without saying a word, was, like myself, moved to tenderness, and we mingled our sighs; her mother, finding there were no compliments, understood nothing of the matter, remained unmoved, and, at the intervals when I was silent, simply repeated, 'Monsieur, that is very fine.'

Madame d'Épinay, uneasy at my being alone in winter, in a solitary house in the midst of woods, often sent to inquire after my health. I never had such real proofs of her friendship for me, to which mine never more fully answered. It would be wrong in me were not I, among these proofs, to make special mention of her portrait, which she sent me, at the same time requesting instructions from me as to the means whereby she might procure mine, painted by Latour, and which had been shown at the Salon. I ought equally to speak of another proof of her attention to me, which, although it is laughable, is a feature in the history of my character, on account of the impression received from it. One day, when it froze to an extreme degree, in opening a packet that she had sent me containing several things I had desired her to purchase for me, I found a little under-petticoat of English flannel, which she told me she had worn, and desired I would make of it an under-waistcoat. The

language of her note was charming, full of unaffected kindness. This consideration, more than friendly, appeared to me so tender, as if she had stripped herself to clothe me, that, in my emotion, I repeatedly kissed — shedding tears at the same time — both the note and the petticoat. Thérèse thought me mad. It is singular that, of all the marks of friendship that Madame d'Épinay ever showed me, none ever touched me as this did, and that, ever since our rupture, I have never recollected it without being very sensibly affected. I for a long time preserved her little note, and it would still have been in my possession had it not shared the fate of my other notes received at the same period.[1]

Although my disorder then gave me but little respite in winter, and during a part of the interval I had to seek relief from appliances, this was still, upon the whole, the season which, since my residence in France, I had passed with most pleasure and tranquillity. During four or five months, whilst the bad weather sheltered me from the interruptions of importunate visits, I tasted to a greater degree than I had ever yet, or have since done, that equable, simple, and independent life, the enjoyment of which still made it the more desirable to me, without any other company than the two *gouverneuses* in reality and the two female cousins in idea. It was then especially that I daily congratulated myself upon the resolution I had had the good sense to take, unmindful of the clamours of my friends, who were vexed at seeing me delivered from their tyranny; and when I heard of the criminal attempt of a madman,[2] when Deleyre and Madame d'Épinay spoke to me in their letters of the troubles and agitation which reigned in Paris, how thankful was I to

[1] See *Mémoires de Madame d'Épinay*, vol. ii. p. 347.

[2] The attempted assassination of Louis XV. by Damiens, on January 4th, 1757.

Heaven for having placed me at a distance from all such spectacles of horror and guilt! These would have continued and increased the bilious humour which the sight of public disorders had given me; while, seeing nothing around me in my retirement but gay and pleasing objects, my heart was wholly abandoned to amiable sentiments. I here note with pleasure the course of the last peaceful moments left to me. The spring succeeding to this winter, which had been so calm, developed the germs of the misfortunes I have yet to describe, in the tissue of which a like interval, wherein I had leisure to respire, will not be found.

I think, however, I can recall to mind that, during this interval of peace, and even in the bosom of my solitude, I was not quite undisturbed by the Holbachians. Diderot stirred up some strife against me; and I am much deceived if it was not in the course of this winter that *Le Fils Naturel*, of which I shall soon have occasion to speak, made its appearance. Not only, from causes which will afterwards be known, have I few records of that period, but those even which have been left in my possession are not very exact with respect to dates. Diderot never dated his letters. Madame d'Épinay and Madame d'Houdetot seldom dated theirs, except the day of the week, and Deleyre mostly confined himself to the same rules. When I was desirous of putting these letters in order, I was obliged to supply, by guessing, dates so uncertain that I cannot depend upon them. Unable, therefore, to fix with certainty the beginning of these quarrels, I prefer relating in one subsequent article everything I can recollect concerning them.

The return of spring had increased my fond delirium, and in my erotic transports I had composed for the last parts of *Julie* several letters, wherein evident marks of the rapture in which I wrote them are found. Amongst

others, I may quote those from the Élysée, and the excursion upon the lake, which, if my memory does not deceive me, are at the end of the fourth part. Whoever, in reading these letters, does not feel his heart soften and melt into the tenderness by which they were dictated, ought to lay down the book: nature has refused him the means of judging of sentiment.

Precisely at the same time I received a second unforeseen visit from Madame d'Houdetot. In the absence of her husband, who was captain of the gendarmerie, and of her lover, who was also in the service, she had come to Eaubonne, in the midst of the Valley of Montmorency, where she had taken a pretty house, and thence she made a new excursion to the Hermitage. She came on horseback, and dressed in men's clothes. Although I am not very fond of this kind of masquerade, I was struck with the romantic appearance she made, and for once it was with love. As this was the first and only time in all my life, and the consequences will for ever render it terrible to my remembrance, I must take permission to enter into some particulars on the subject.

Madame la Comtesse d'Houdetot was nearly thirty years of age, and not handsome; her face was marked by the small-pox, her complexion coarse, she was short-sighted, and her eyes were rather round; nevertheless she had a youthful air, and her physiognomy, possessing vivacity and sweetness, was attractive. She had an abundance of long black hair, which hung down in natural curls much below her waist; her figure was neatly formed, and she was at once awkward and graceful in her movements; her wit was natural and pleasing; gaiety, heedlessness, and ingenuousness were happily combined; she abounded in charming sallies, which were so little premeditated that they sometimes escaped her lips in spite of herself. She possessed several agreeable talents,

played the harpsichord, danced well, and wrote pleasing poetry. Her character was angelic; this was founded upon a sweetness of mind, and, except prudence and fortitude, contained in it every virtue. She was besides so much to be depended upon in all intercourse, so faithful in society, that even her enemies were not under the necessity of concealing from her their secrets. I mean by her enemies the men, or rather the women, by whom she was not beloved — for as to herself, she had not a heart capable of hatred; and I am of opinion that this conformity with mine greatly contributed towards inspiring me with a passion for her. In confidential interviews of the most intimate friendship I never heard her speak ill of persons who were absent, not even of her sister-in-law. She could neither conceal her thoughts from any one nor disguise any of her sentiments; and I am persuaded that she spoke of her lover to her husband as she spoke of him to her friends and acquaintance, and to all the world. What proved, beyond all manner of doubt, the purity and sincerity of her nature was that, being subject to very extraordinary absences of mind, and the most laughable mistakes, she was often guilty of some very imprudent ones with respect to herself, but never in the least offensive to any other.

She had been married very young and against her inclinations to the Comte d'Houdetot, a man of fashion, and a good officer, but a man who loved play and intrigue, who was not very lovable, and whom she never loved. She found in Monsieur de Saint-Lambert all the merit of her husband, with more agreeable qualities of mind, wit, virtue, and talents. If anything in the manners of the time can be pardoned, it is surely an attachment which duration renders more pure, to which its effects do honour, and which becomes cemented by reciprocal esteem.

It was a little from inclination, as I am disposed to think, but much more to please Saint-Lambert, that she came to see me. He had requested her to do it; and there was reason to believe that the friendship which began to be established between us would render this society agreeable to all three. She knew I was acquainted with their relation, and, as she could speak to me without restraint, it was natural she should find my conversation agreeable. She came; I saw her; I was intoxicated with love without an object; this intoxication fascinated my eyes; the object fixed itself upon her; I saw my Julie in Madame d'Houdetot, and I soon saw nothing but Madame d'Houdetot, but with all the perfections with which I had just adorned the idol of my heart. To complete my delirium she spoke to me of Saint-Lambert with the fondness of a passionate lover. Contagious force of love! while listening to her and finding myself near her, I was seized with a delicious trembling which I had never experienced before when near to any person whatsoever. She spoke, and I felt myself affected. I thought I was only interested by her sentiments, when I perceived I possessed those which were similar. I drank freely of the poisoned cup, of which I yet tasted nothing more than the sweetness. Finally, imperceptibly to us both, she inspired me for herself with all that she expressed for her lover. Alas! it was very late in life; and cruel was it to consume with a passion not less violent than unfortunate, for a woman whose heart was already filled with love for another.

Notwithstanding the extraordinary emotions I had felt when in her company, I did not at first perceive what had happened to me; it was not until after her departure that, wishing to think of Julie, I was struck with surprise at being unable to think of anything but Madame d'Houdetot. Then were my eyes opened: I felt my mis-

fortune and lamented what had happened, but I did not foresee the consequences.

I hesitated a long time on the manner in which I should conduct myself towards her, as if real love left one sufficient reason to deliberate and act accordingly. I had not yet determined upon this when she unexpectedly returned and found me unprovided. Then I was instructed. Shame, the companion of evil, rendered me dumb and made me tremble in her presence. I dared neither to open my mouth nor to raise my eyes. I was in an inexpressible confusion, which it was impossible she should not perceive. I resolved to confess to her my state of mind, and leave her to guess the cause: this was telling her in terms sufficiently clear.

Had I been young and lovable, and Madame d'Houdetot afterwards weak, I should here blame her conduct; but this was not the case, and I am obliged to applaud and admire it. The resolution she took was equally prudent and generous. She could not suddenly break with me without giving her reasons for it to Saint-Lambert, who himself had desired her to come and see me; this would have exposed two friends to a rupture, and perhaps a public one, which she wished to avoid. She had for me esteem and good wishes: she pitied my folly without encouraging it, and endeavoured to restore me to reason. She was glad to preserve to her lover and herself a friend for whom she had some respect, and she spoke of nothing with more pleasure than the intimate and agreeable society we might form between us three when I should become reasonable. She did not always confine herself to these friendly exhortations, and, in case of need, did not spare me more severe reproaches, which I had richly deserved.

I spared myself still less. The moment I was alone I began to recover. I was more calm after my declaration:

love known to the person by whom it is inspired becomes more supportable. The forcible manner in which I reproached myself with mine ought to have cured me of it, had the thing been possible. What powerful motives did I not call to my aid to stifle it! My morals, sentiments, and principles, the shame, the treachery, and crime of abusing what was confided to friendship, and, in fine, the ridiculousness of burning, at my age, with extravagant passion for an object whose heart was pre-engaged, and who could neither afford me any return nor the least hope; moreover, with a passion which, far from having anything to gain by constancy, daily became less sufferable.

Who would imagine that this last consideration, which ought to have added weight to all the others, was that whereby I eluded them? What scruple, thought I, ought I to make of a folly prejudicial to nobody but myself? Am I, then, a young gentleman of whom Madame d'Houdetot ought to be afraid? Would not it be said satirically, in answer to my presumptuous remorse, that my gallantry, manner, and style of dress must seduce her? Poor Jean-Jacques, love on at thy ease, with a good conscience, and be not afraid that thy sighs will be prejudicial to Saint-Lambert!

It has been seen that I never was enterprising, not even in my youth. Thinking so was according to my turn of mind; it flattered my passion. This was sufficient to induce me to abandon myself to it without reserve, and to laugh even at the impertinent scruple that I thought I had made from vanity rather than from reason. This is a great lesson for virtuous minds, which vice never attacks openly: it finds means to surprise them by masking itself with some sophism, and not unfrequently some virtue.

Guilty without remorse, I soon became so without

measure; and I entreat the reader to observe in what manner my passion followed my nature, at length to plunge me into an abyss. In the first place, it assumed an air of humility to encourage me; and to render me intrepid it carried this humility even to mistrust. Madame d'Houdetot, incessantly putting me in mind of my duty, without once for a single moment flattering my folly, treated me, on the other hand, with the greatest kindness, and adopted towards me the tone of the most tender friendship. This friendship would, I protest, have satisfied my wishes, had I thought it sincere; but, finding it too pronounced to be real, I took it into my head that love, so ill-suited to my age and appearance, had rendered me contemptible in the eyes of Madame d'Houdetot, that this young flighty creature only wished to divert herself with me and my superannuated passion, that she had communicated this to Saint-Lambert, and that the indignation caused by my breach of friendship having made her lover enter into her views, they were agreed to turn my head and then to laugh at me. This folly, which at twenty-six years of age had made me guilty of extravagant behaviour with Madame de Larnage, whom I did not know, would have been pardonable in me at forty-five with Madame d'Houdetot, had not I known that she and her lover were persons of too generous a disposition to indulge in such a barbarous amusement.

Madame d'Houdetot continued her visits, which I delayed not to return. She, as well as myself, was fond of walking, and we took long walks in an enchanting country. Satisfied with loving and daring to say I loved, I should have been in the most agreeable situation had not my extravagance spoiled all its charm. She could not at first comprehend the foolish pettishness with which I received her attentions, but my heart, incapable

of concealing what passed in it, did not long leave her ignorant of my suspicions. She endeavoured to laugh at them; but this expedient did not succeed: transports of rage would have been the consequence, and she changed her tone. Her compassionate gentleness was invincible. She made me reproaches which penetrated my heart; she expressed an inquietude at my unjust fears, of which I took advantage. I required proofs of her being in earnest. She perceived there were no other means of relieving me of my apprehensions. I became pressing: the step was delicate. It is astonishing, and perhaps without example, that a woman, having suffered herself to be brought to terms, should have got herself off so well. She refused me nothing the most tender friendship could grant; she granted me nothing that rendered her unfaithful; and I had the mortification of seeing that the disorder into which her most trifling favours had thrown all my senses had not lighted up the least spark in hers.

I have somewhere said [1] that nothing should be granted to the senses when we wish to refuse them anything. To prove how false this maxim was relative to Madame d'Houdetot, and how far she was right in depending upon her own strength of mind, it would be necessary to enter into the detail of our long and frequent conversations, and follow them, in all their liveliness, during the four months we passed together in an intimacy almost without example between two friends of different sexes who contain themselves within the bounds which we never exceeded. Ah! if I had lived so long without feeling the power of real love, my heart and senses abundantly paid the arrears. What, therefore, are the transports we feel with the object of our affections by whom we are beloved, if even an unshared passion can inspire such as I felt!

[1] *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, part iii. 18.

But I am wrong in calling it an unshared love; that which I felt was so in some measure: love was equal on both sides, but not reciprocal. We were both intoxicated with the passion — she for her lover, and I for herself; our sighs and delicious tears were mingled together. Tender confidants of the secrets of each other, there was so great a similarity in our sentiments that it was impossible they should not find some common point of union; and yet in the midst of this delicious intoxication she never forgot herself for a moment; and I solemnly protest that if ever, led away by my senses, I may have attempted to render her unfaithful, I was never really desirous of succeeding. The very vehemence of my passion restrained it within bounds. The duty of self-denial had elevated my soul. The lustre of every virtue adorned in my eyes the idol of my heart; to have soiled the divine image would have been to destroy it. I might have committed the crime: it has been a hundred times committed in my heart; but to dishonour my Sophie! Ah! was this ever possible? No! I have told her a hundred times it was not. Had I had it in my power to satisfy my desires, had she consented to commit herself to my discretion, I should, except in a few moments of delirium, have refused to be happy at such a price. I loved her too well to wish to possess her.

The distance from the Hermitage to Eaubonne is almost a league; in my frequent excursions to it I sometimes slept there. One evening, after having supped together, we went to walk in the garden under a brilliant moon. At the bottom of the garden was a considerable copse, through which we passed on our way to a pretty grove ornamented with a cascade, of which I had given her the idea, and she had procured it to be executed accordingly. Eternal remembrance of innocence and enjoyment! It was in this grove that, seated by her side

upon a bank of turf under an acacia in full bloom, I found for the emotions of my heart a language worthy of them. It was the first and only time in my life; but I was sublime, if everything amiable and seductive with which the most tender and ardent love can inspire the heart of man can be so called. What intoxicating tears did I shed upon her knees! how many did I make her shed unwillingly! At length in an involuntary transport she exclaimed: 'No, never was a man so amiable, nor ever was there lover who loved like you! But your friend Saint-Lambert hears us, and my heart is incapable of loving twice.' I sighed and was silent. I embraced her — what an embrace! But this was all. She had lived alone for the last six months — that is, absent from her lover and her husband; I had seen her almost every day during three months, and Love never failed to make a third. We had supped *tête-à-tête*, we were alone, in a grove by moonlight, and after two hours of the most lively and tender conversation, at midnight she left this grove, and the arms of her lover, as morally and physically pure as she had entered it. Reader, weigh all these circumstances; I will add no more.

Do not, however, imagine that in this situation my passions left me as undisturbed as I was with Thérèse and Mamma. I have already observed that I was at this time inspired not only with love, but with love in all its energy and all its fury. I will not describe either the agitations, tremblings, palpitations, convulsionary emotions, or faintings of the heart, I continually experienced; these may be judged of by the effect her image alone made upon me. I have observed the distance from the Hermitage to Eaubonne was considerable. I went by the hills of Andilly, which are delightful; I mused, as I walked, on her whom I was going to see, the affectionate reception she would give me, and upon the kiss which awaited me

at my arrival. This single, this fatal kiss,[1] even before I received it, inflamed my blood to such a degree as to affect my head; my eyes were dazzled, my knees trembled, and were unable to support me; I was obliged to stop and sit down; my whole frame was in inconceivable disorder, and I was upon the point of fainting. Knowing the danger, I endeavoured in setting out to divert my attention from the object, and think of something else. I had not proceeded twenty steps before the same recollection, and all its consequences, assailed me in such a manner that it was impossible to avoid them; and in spite of all my efforts I do not believe that I ever made this excursion alone with impunity. I arrived at Eaubonne weak, exhausted, and scarcely able to support myself. The moment I saw her everything was repaired; all I felt in her presence was the importunity of an inexhaustible and useless ardour. Upon the road to Eaubonne there was a pleasant terrace called Mont Olympe, at which we sometimes met. I was first to arrive; it was proper that I should wait for her; but how dear this waiting cost me! To divert my attention, I endeavoured to write with my pencil notes which I could have written with the purest drops of my blood; I never could finish one that was legible. When she found one of these in the niche upon which we had agreed, all she could learn from the contents was the deplorable state in which I was when I wrote it. This state, and its continuation during three months of irritation and self-denial, so exhausted me that it was several years before I recovered from it; and at the end of these it left me an ailment which I shall carry with me, or which will carry me, to the grave. Such was the sole enjoyment of a man of the most inflammable constitution, but at the same time perhaps one of the most timid mortals that nature ever pro-

[1] *Childe Harold*, iii. 79.

duced. Such were the last happy days that were meted out to me upon earth; here begins the long train of evils, in which there will be found but little interruption.

It has been seen that, during the whole course of my life, my heart, as transparent as crystal, has never been capable of concealing for the space of a moment any sentiment in the least lively which had taken refuge in it. Let it be guessed whether it was possible for me long to conceal my affection for Madame d'Houdetot. Our intimacy struck the eyes of everybody; we did not make of it either a secret or a mystery. It was not of a nature to require any such precaution; and, as Madame d'Houdetot had for me the most tender friendship, with which she did not reproach herself, and I for her an esteem with the justice of which nobody was better acquainted than myself — she frank, absent, heedless; I true, awkward, haughty, impatient, and choleric — we exposed ourselves more in deceitful security than we should have done had we been culpable. We both went to La Chevrette, often in company; we sometimes met there by appointment. We lived there according to our accustomed manner, walking together every day, talking of our amours, our duties, our friend, and our innocent projects — all this in the park, opposite the apartment of Madame d'Épinay, under her windows, whence incessantly examining us and thinking herself braved, she glutted her heart through her eyes with rage and indignation.

All women have the art of concealing their anger, especially when it is great. Madame d'Épinay, violent but deliberate, possessed this art to an eminent degree. She feigned not to see or suspect anything; and at the same time that she doubled towards me her cares, attentions, and allurements, she affected to load her sister-in-law with incivilities and marks of disdain, which she seemingly wished to communicate to me. It will easily

be imagined she did not succeed; but I was on the rack. Torn by opposite passions, at the same time that I was sensible of her caresses, I could scarcely contain my anger when I saw her wanting in good manners to Madame d'Houdetot. The angelic sweetness of the latter made her endure everything without a complaint or even without being offended. She was, besides, often so absent and always so little attentive to these things, that half the time she did not perceive them.

I was so taken up with my passion, that, seeing nothing but Sophie (one of the names of Madame d'Houdetot), I did not even perceive that I was become the laughing-stock of the whole house, and all those who came to it. The Baron d'Holbach, who never, so far as I knew, had been at La Chevrette, was one of the latter. Had I at that time been as mistrustful as I am since become, I should have strongly suspected Madame d'Épinay to have contrived this journey to give the Baron the amusing spectacle of the amorous citizen. But I was then so stupid that I saw not even that which was glaring to everybody. My stupidity did not, however, prevent me from finding in the Baron a more jovial and satisfied appearance than ordinary. Instead of looking upon me with his usual moroseness, he said to me a hundred jocose things without my knowing what he meant. Surprise was painted in my countenance, but I said not a word; Madame d'Épinay shook her sides with laughing; I knew not what possessed them. As nothing yet passed the bounds of pleasantry, the best thing I could have done, had I been in the secret, would have been to have humoured the joke. It is true, I perceived amid the rallying gaiety of the Baron that his eyes sparkled with a malicious joy, which would have given me pain had I then remarked it to the degree in which it has since recurred to my recollection.

One day when I went to see Madame d'Houdetot at Eaubonne after her return from one of her journeys to Paris, I found her melancholy, and observed that she had been weeping. I was obliged to put a restraint on myself, because Madame de Blainville, sister to her husband, was present; but the moment I found an opportunity I expressed to her my uneasiness. 'Ah!' said she, with a sigh, 'I am much afraid your follies will cost me the repose of the rest of my days. Saint-Lambert has been informed of what has passed, and is ill informed of it. He does me justice, but he is vexed; and, what is still worse, he conceals part of his vexation. Fortunately I have not concealed from him anything relative to our connection, which was formed under his auspices. My letters, like my heart, were full of yourself. I made him acquainted with everything except your extravagant passion, of which I hoped to cure you, and which, though he does not speak, I perceive he imputes to me as a crime. Somebody has done us ill offices; I have been injured, but what does that signify? Either let us break entirely with each other, or do you be what you ought to be; I will not in future have anything to conceal from my lover.'

This was the first moment in which I was sensible of the shame of feeling myself humbled by the sentiment of my fault, in presence of a young woman, the justness of whose reproaches I inwardly confessed, and to whom I ought to have been a Mentor. The indignation I felt against myself would, perhaps, have been sufficient to overcome my weakness, had not the tender passion inspired in me by the victim of it again softened my heart. Alas! was this a moment to harden it when it was overflowed by the tears which penetrated it in every part? This tenderness was soon changed into rage against the vile informers, who had seen nothing but the evil of a

criminal but involuntary sentiment, without believing, or even imagining, the sincere uprightness of heart by which it was counteracted. We did not remain long in doubt about the hand by which the blow was directed.

We both knew that Madame d'Épinay corresponded with Saint-Lambert. This was not the first storm she had raised up against Madame d'Houdetot, from whom she had made a thousand efforts to detach her lover, the success of some of which made the consequences to be dreaded. Besides, Grimm, who I think had accompanied Monsieur de Castries to the army, was in Westphalia, as well as Saint-Lambert; they sometimes visited one another. Grimm had made some attempts on Madame d'Houdetot, which had not succeeded, and being extremely piqued, suddenly discontinued his visits to her. Let it be judged with what calmness, modest as he is known to be, he supposed she preferred to him a man older than himself, and of whom, since Grimm had frequented the great, he had never spoken but as a person whom he patronised.

My suspicions of Madame d'Épinay were changed into a certainty when I heard what had passed in my own house. When I was at La Chevrette, Thérèse frequently came there, either to bring me letters or to pay me that attention which my ill state of health rendered necessary. Madame d'Épinay had asked her if Madame d'Houdetot and I did not write to each other. Upon her answering in the affirmative, Madame d'Épinay pressed her to give her the letters of Madame d'Houdetot, assuring her that she would reseal them in such a manner that it should never be known. Thérèse, without showing how much she was shocked at the proposition, and without even putting me upon my guard, did nothing more than conceal the letters she brought me more carefully — a lucky precaution, for Madame

d'Épinay had her watched when she arrived, and, waiting for her in the passage, several times carried her audaciousness as far as to examine her tucker. She did more than this: having one day invited herself with Monsieur de Margency to dinner at the Hermitage, for the first time since I had resided there, she seized the moment when I was walking with Margency to go into my closet with the mother and daughter and to press them to show her the letters of Madame d'Houdetot. Had the mother known where the letters were, they would have been given to her; but, fortunately, the daughter was the only person who was in the secret, and denied my having preserved any of them, — an honest, faithful, and generous falsehood, whilst truth would have been a perfidy. Madame d'Épinay, perceiving Thérèse was not to be seduced, endeavoured to irritate her by jealousy, reproaching her with her easy temper and blindness. 'How is it possible,' said she to her, 'that you do not perceive there is a criminal intercourse between them? If besides what strikes your eyes you stand in need of other proofs, lend your assistance to obtain that which may furnish them. You say he tears up the letters from Madame d'Houdetot as soon as he has read them. Well, carefully gather up the pieces and give them to me; I will take upon myself to put them together.' Such were the lessons my friend gave to my dear associate.

Thérèse had the discretion to conceal from me, for a considerable time, all these attempts; but, perceiving how much I was perplexed, she thought herself obliged to inform me of everything, to the end that, knowing with whom I had to do, I might take measures to secure myself against plots then on foot. My rage and indignation are not to be described. Instead of dissembling with Madame d'Épinay according to her own example, and making use of counterplots, I abandoned myself

without reserve to the natural impetuosity of my temper, and with my accustomed inconsiderateness came to an open rupture. My imprudence may be judged of by the following letters, which sufficiently show the manner of proceeding of both parties on this occasion: —

NOTE FROM MADAME D'ÉPINAY (A, No. 44).

'Why do I not see you, my dear friend? You make me uneasy. You have so often promised me to do nothing but go and come between this place and the Hermitage! In this I have left you at liberty; and yet you have suffered a week to pass without coming. Had I not been told you were well, I should have imagined the contrary. I expected you either the day before yesterday or yesterday, but found myself disappointed. Heavens! what is the matter with you? You have no business, nor can you have any uneasiness; for, had this been the case, I flatter myself you would have come and confided it to me. You are, therefore, ill! Relieve me, I beseech you, speedily from my fears. Adieu, my dear friend! let this "adieu" produce me a "good-morning" from you.'

ANSWER

'*This* (*Wednesday*) *morning.*

'I cannot yet say anything to you. I wait to be better informed, and this I shall be sooner or later. In the meantime, be persuaded that innocence accused will find a defender sufficiently powerful to cause some repentance in the slanderers, be they who they may.'

SECOND NOTE FROM THE SAME (A, No. 45).

'Do you know that your letter frightens me? What does it mean? I have read it twenty times and more. In truth, I do not understand what it means. All I can perceive is, that you are uneasy and tormented, and that you wait until you are no longer so before you speak to me upon the subject. Is this, my dear friend, what we agreed upon? What, then, is become of that friendship and confidence, and by what means have I lost them? Is it with me or for me that you are angry? However this may be, come to me this evening, I

conjure you: remember you promised me, no longer than a week ago, to let nothing remain upon your mind, but at once to speak freely to me. My dear friend, I live in that confidence —— Stay, I have just read your letter again; I do not understand the contents better, but they make me tremble. You seem to be cruelly agitated. I could wish to calm your mind; but, as I am ignorant of the cause of your inquietude, I know not what to say, except that I am as wretched as yourself, and shall remain so until we meet. If you are not here this evening at six o'clock, I set off to-morrow for the Hermitage, let the weather be how it will, and in whatever state of health I may be; for I can no longer support the anxiety I now feel. Good-day, my dear friend. At all risks, I take the liberty to tell you, without knowing whether or not you are in need of such advice, that you should endeavour to stop the inroads of inquietude in solitude. A fly becomes a monster; I have frequently experienced it.'

ANSWER

'*This (Wednesday) evening.*

'I can neither come to see you nor receive your visit so long as my present inquietude continues. The confidence of which you speak no longer exists, and it will not be easy for you to recover it. I see nothing more in your present anxiety than the desire of drawing from the confessions of others some advantage agreeable to your views; and my heart, so ready to pour its overflowings into another which opens to receive them, is shut against trick and cunning. I distinguish your ordinary address in the difficulty you find in understanding my note. Do you think me dupe enough to believe that you have not comprehended what it meant? No; but I shall know how to overcome your subtleties by my frankness. I will explain myself more clearly, that you may understand me still less.

'Two lovers, closely united and worthy of each other's love, are dear to me; I expect you will not know whom I mean unless I name them. I presume attempts have been made to disunite them, and that I have been made use of to inspire one of the two with jealousy. The choice was not judicious, but it appeared convenient to the purposes of malice, and of this malice it is you whom I suspect to be guilty. I hope this becomes more clear.

'Thus the woman whom I most esteem would, with my knowledge, have been loaded with the infamy of dividing her heart and person between two lovers, and I with that of being one of these wretches. If I knew that, for a single moment in your life, you had ever thought this, either of her or myself, I should hate you until my last hour. But it is with having said, and not with having thought it, that I charge you. In this case, I cannot comprehend which of the three you wished to injure; but if you love peace of mind, tremble lest you should have succeeded. I have not concealed, either from you or her, all the ill I think of certain connections; but I wish these to end by a means as virtuous as the cause, and that an illegitimate love may be changed into an eternal friendship. Should I, who never did ill to any person, be the innocent means of doing it to my friends? No; I should never forgive you; I should become your irreconcilable enemy. Your secrets are all I should respect; for I will never be a man without honour.

'I do not apprehend that my present perplexity will continue a long time. I shall soon know whether or not I am deceived. I shall then, perhaps, have great injuries to repair, which I will do with as much cheerfulness as that with which the most agreeable act of my life has been accompanied. But do you know in what manner I will make amends for my faults during the short space of time I have to remain near you? By doing what nobody but myself would do — by telling you freely what the world thinks of you, and the breaches you have to repair in your reputation. Notwithstanding all the pretended friends by whom you are surrounded, the moment you see me depart, you may bid adieu to truth; you will no longer find any person who will tell it to you.'

### Third Letter from the Same (A, No. 46).

'I did not understand your letter of this morning; this I told you because it was the case. I understand that of this evening; do not imagine that I shall ever return an answer to it; I am too anxious to forget what it contains; and, although you excite my pity, I am not proof against the bitterness with which it has filled my mind. I descend to trick and cunning with you! I accused of the blackest of all infamies! Adieu, I regret your having the —— adieu. I know not what I say ——

adieu! I shall be very anxious to forgive you. You will come when you please; you will be better received than your suspicions deserve. All I have to desire of you is not to trouble yourself about my reputation. What people say of it matters little to me. My conduct is good, and this is sufficient for me. Besides, I am ignorant of what has happened to the two persons who are dear to me as they are to you.'

This last letter extricated me from a terrible embarrassment, and threw me into another of little less magnitude. Although these letters and answers were sent and returned in the same day with an extreme rapidity, the interval had been sufficient to place another between my transports of rage, and to give me time to reflect on the enormity of my imprudence. Madame d'Houdetot had not recommended to me anything so much as to remain quiet, to leave her the care of extricating herself, and to avoid, expecially at that moment, all noise and rupture; and I, by the most open and atrocious insults, was taking the surest means of carrying rage to its greatest height in the heart of a woman who was already but too well disposed to it. I now could naturally expect nothing from her but an answer so haughty, disdainful, and contemptuous, that I could not, without the utmost meanness, do otherwise than immediately quit her house. Happily she, more adroit than I was furious, avoided by the manner of her answer reducing me to that extremity. But it was necessary either to quit or immediately to see her; the alternative was inevitable. I resolved on the latter, though I foresaw how much I must be embarrassed in the explanation. For how was I to get through it without exposing either Madame d'Houdetot or Thérèse? and woe to her whom I should name! There was nothing that the vengeance of an implacable and an intriguing woman did not make me fear for the person who should be the object of it. It was to prevent this

misfortune that in my letter I had spoken of nothing but suspicions, that I might not be under the necessity of producing my proofs. This, it is true, rendered my transports less excusable, no simple suspicions being sufficient to authorise me to treat a woman, and especially a friend, in the way I had treated Madame d'Épinay. But here begins the great and noble task I worthily fulfilled, of expiating my faults and secret weaknesses by charging myself with graver faults which I was incapable of committing, and which I never did commit.

I had not to bear the attack I had expected, and fear was the greatest evil I received from it. At my approach Madame d'Épinay threw her arms about my neck, bursting into tears. This unexpected reception, and by an old friend, extremely affected me; I also shed many tears. I said to her a few words which had not much meaning; she uttered others with still less, and everything ended here. Supper was served; we sat down to table, where, in the expectation of the explanation that I imagined to be deferred until supper was over, I made a very poor figure, for I am so overpowered by the most trifling inquietude of mind that I cannot conceal it from persons the least clear-sighted. My embarrassed appearance should have given her courage, yet she did not risk anything upon that foundation. There was no more explanation after than before supper; none took place on the next day, and our conversations, with many intervals of silence, consisted of indifferent things, or some complimentary words on my part, by which, while I informed her I could not say more relative to my suspicions, I asserted, with the greatest truth, that if they were ill-founded my whole life should be employed in repairing the injustice. She did not show the least curiosity to know precisely what they were, nor for what reason I had formed them, and all our peace-making consisted on her

part as well as mine in the embrace of our first meeting. Since Madame d'Épinay was the only person offended, at least in form, I thought it was not for me to strive to bring about a full explanation for which she herself did not seem anxious, and I returned as I had come; continuing, besides, to live with her upon the same footing as before, I soon almost entirely forgot the quarrel, and foolishly believed that she had forgotten it also, because she seemed to remember it no longer.

This, as it will soon appear, was not the only vexation caused me by weakness; but I had others not less acute, which I had not brought upon myself. The only cause of these was a desire of forcing me from my solitude,[1] by means of tormenting me. They originated from Diderot and the Holbachians. Since I had resided at the Hermitage, Diderot had incessantly harassed me, either himself or by means of Deleyre; and I soon perceived, from the pleasantries of the latter upon my ramblings in the groves, with what pleasure he had travestied the hermit into the gallant shepherd. But this was not the question in my quarrels with Diderot; the causes of these were more serious. After the publication of *Le Fils Naturel* he had sent me a copy of it, which I had read with the interest and attention I ever bestow on the works of a friend. In reading the kind of poem in dialogue annexed to it, I was surprised and rather grieved to find in it, amongst several things disobliging but supportable against men living in solitude, this bitter and severe sentence without the least qualification: 'Il n'y a que le méchant qui soit seul.' This sentence is equivocal, and seems to present a double meaning — the one true,

[1] That is, to take from it the old woman, who was wanted in the conspiracy. It is astonishing that during this long quarrel my stupid confidence prevented me from comprehending that it was not I but she whom they wanted at Paris. — R.

the other false — since it is impossible that a man who is determined to remain alone can do the least harm to anybody, and consequently he cannot be wicked. The sentence in itself therefore required an interpretation — the more so from an author who, when he sent it to the press, had a friend retired from the world. It appeared to me shocking and uncivil either to have forgotten that solitary friend, or, in remembering him, not to have made from the general maxim the honourable and just exception which he owed, not only to his friend, but to so many worthy sages, who, in all ages, have sought for peace and tranquillity in retirement, and of whom, for the first time since the creation of the world, a writer took it into his head, with one stroke of his pen, indiscriminately to make so many villains.

I had a great affection and the most sincere esteem for Diderot, and fully depended upon his having the same sentiments for me. But, tired with his indefatigable obstinacy in continually opposing my inclinations, tastes, manner of living, and everything which concerned no person but myself; shocked at seeing a man younger than I was wish, at all events, to govern me like a child; disgusted with his facility in promising, and his negligence in performing; weary of so many appointments made by himself, and broken, while new ones were again capriciously made only to be again broken; displeased at uselessly waiting for him three or four times a month on the days he had assigned, and in dining alone at night after having gone to Saint-Denis to meet him, and waited the whole day for his coming — my heart was already full of these multiplied injuries. The last appeared to me still more serious, and gave me infinite pain. I wrote to complain of it, but in so mild and tender a manner that I moistened my paper with my tears, and my letter was sufficiently affecting to have drawn others from himself.

One would never guess his answer on this subject; it was literally as follows (A, No. 33): —

'I am glad my work has pleased and affected you. You are not of my opinion relative to hermits. Say as much good of them as you please, you will be the only one in the world of whom I shall think well; even on this there would be much to say were it possible to speak to you without giving offence. A woman eighty years of age! etc. A phrase of a letter from a son of Madame d'Épinay — which, if I know you well, must have given you much pain — has been mentioned to me.'

The last two expressions of this letter want explanation.

Soon after I went to reside at the Hermitage, Madame Le Vasseur seemed dissatisfied with her situation, and to think the habitation too retired. Her remarks on this matter having been reported to me, I offered to send her back to Paris, if that was more agreeable to her, to pay her lodging, and to have the same care taken of her as if she remained with me. She rejected my offer, assured me she was well satisfied with the Hermitage, and that the country air was of service to her. This was evident, for, if I may so speak, she seemed to become young again, and enjoyed better health than at Paris. Her daughter told me that her mother would, on the whole, have been very sorry to quit the Hermitage, which was really a very delightful abode, being fond of the little employments of the garden and the care of the fruit, of which she had the handling, but that she had said what she had been desired to say to induce me to return to Paris.

Failing in this attempt, they endeavoured to obtain by a scruple the effect which complaisance had not produced, and construed into a crime my keeping the old woman at a distance from the succours of which, at her age, she might be in need. They did not recollect that she and many other old people, whose lives are prolonged by the

air of the country, might obtain these succours at Montmorency, near to which I lived; as if there were no old people except in Paris, and that it was impossible for them to live in any other place. Madame Le Vasseur, who ate a good deal, and with extreme voracity, was subject to overflowings of bile and to strong diarrhœas, which lasted several days, and served her as a remedy. At Paris she neither did nor took anything for them, but left nature to itself. She observed the same rule at the Hermitage, knowing it was the best thing she could do. No matter, since there were not in the country either physicians or apothecaries, keeping her there must, no doubt, be with a desire to end her existence, although she was in perfect health. Diderot should have determined at what age, under pain of being punished for homicide, it is no longer permitted to let old people remain out of Paris.

This was one of the two atrocious accusations from which he did not except me in his remark — that none but the wicked were alone; and the meaning of his pathetic exclamation with the et cetera which he had benignantly added: 'A woman of eighty years of age! etc.'

I thought the best answer that could be given to this reproach would be from Madame Le Vasseur herself. I desired her to write freely and naturally her sentiments to Madame d'Épinay. To relieve her from all constraint I would not see her letter, and I showed her that which I am going to transcribe. I wrote it to Madame d'Épinay, upon the subject of an answer I wished to return to a letter from Diderot still more severe, and which she had prevented me from sending.

*'Thursday.*

'My good friend, Madame Le Vasseur is to write to you. I have desired her to tell you sincerely what she thinks. To

remove from her all constraint I have intimated to her that I will not see her letter, and I beg of you not to repeat to me any part of its contents.

'I will not send my letter, because you do not choose I should; but, feeling myself grievously offended, it would be baseness and falsehood, of either of which it is impossible for me to be guilty, to acknowledge myself in the wrong. The Gospel commands him to whom a blow is given to turn the other cheek, but not to ask pardon. Do you remember the man in the comedy who exclaims, while he is giving another blows with his staff, "This is the part of a philosopher"?

'Do not flatter yourself that he will be prevented from coming by the bad weather we now have. His rage will give him the time and strength which friendship refuses him, and it will be the first time in his life he ever came upon the day he had appointed. He will neglect nothing that he may come and repeat to me verbally the injuries with which he loads me in his letters. I will endure them with anything but patience. He will return to Paris to be ill again, and, according to custom, I shall be a very hateful man. What is to be done? Endure it all.

'But do not you admire the wisdom of the man who would absolutely come for me in a hackney-coach to dine at Saint-Denis, bring me home in a hackney-coach, and whose means, eight days afterwards, oblige him to come to the Hermitage on foot? (A, No. 34.) It is not possible, to speak his own language, that this should be the style of sincerity. But were this the case, strange changes of fortune must have happened in the course of a week.

'I join in your affliction for the illness of madame your mother, but you will perceive that your grief is not equal to mine. We suffer less by seeing the persons we love ill than when they are unjust and cruel.

'Adieu, my good friend; I shall never again mention to you this unhappy affair. You speak of going to Paris with an unconcern which, at any other time, would give me pleasure.'

I wrote to Diderot, telling him what I had done relative to Madame Le Vasseur, upon the proposal of Madame d'Épinay herself; and Madame Le Vasseur having, as it may be imagined, chosen to remain at the Hermitage, where she enjoyed a good state of health, always had

company, and lived very agreeably. Diderot, not knowing what else to attribute to me as a crime, construed my precaution into one, and discovered another in Madame Le Vasseur continuing to reside at the Hermitage, although this was by her own choice, and though her going to Paris had depended, and still depended, upon herself, where she would continue to receive the same succours from me as I gave to her in my house.

This is the explanation of the first reproach in the letter of Diderot (No. 33). That of the second is in letter No. 34: —

'*Le Lettré* (a name given in jest by Grimm to the son of Madame d'Épinay) must have informed you there were upon the rampart twenty poor persons who were dying with cold and hunger, and waiting for the liard you customarily gave them. This is a specimen of our little babbling —— And if you understood the rest it would amuse you, perhaps.'

Here is my answer to this terrible argument, of which Diderot seemed so proud: —

'I think I answered *Le Lettré* — that is, the Farmer-General's son — that I did not pity the poor whom he had seen upon the rampart, waiting for my liard; that he had probably amply made it up to them; that I appointed him my substitute; that the poor of Paris would have no reason to complain of the change; and that I should not easily find so good a one for the poor of Montmorency, who were in much greater need of assistance. Here is a good and respectable old man, who, after having worked hard all his lifetime, no longer being able to continue his labours, is in his old days dying with hunger. My conscience is more satisfied with the two sous I give him every Monday than with the hundred liards I should have distributed amongst all the beggars on the rampart. You are pleasant men, you philosophers, while you consider the inhabitants of cities as the only persons whom you ought to befriend. It is in the country that men learn how to love and serve humanity; all they learn in cities is to despise it.'

Such were the singular scruples upon which a man of sense had the folly to attribute to me as a crime my retiring from Paris, and pretended to prove to me by my own example that it was not possible to live out of the capital without becoming a bad man. I cannot at present conceive how I could be guilty of the folly of answering him, and of suffering myself to be angry, instead of laughing in his face. However, the decisions of Madame d'Épinay and the clamours of the Coterie Holbachique had so far operated in his favour that I was generally thought to be in the wrong; and Madame d'Houdetot herself, very partial to Diderot, insisted upon my going to see him at Paris, and making all the advances towards an accommodation which, full and sincere as it was on my part, was not of long duration. The victorious argument by which she subdued my heart was that at that moment Diderot was in distress. Besides the storm raised against the *Encyclopédie*, he had then another violent one to make head against, relative to his piece, which, notwithstanding the short history that he had printed at the beginning, he was accused of having entirely taken from Goldoni. Diderot, more wounded by criticisms than Voltaire, was overwhelmed by them. Madame de Grafigny had been malicious enough to spread a report that I had broken with him on this account. I thought it would be just and generous publicly to prove the contrary, and I went to pass two days, not only with him, but at his lodgings. This, since I had taken up my abode at the Hermitage, was my second journey to Paris. I had made the first to run to poor Gauffecourt, who had had a stroke of apoplexy, from which he has never perfectly recovered. I did not quit the side of his pillow until he was out of danger.

Diderot received me well. How many wrongs are effaced by the embraces of a friend! after these, what

resentment can remain in the heart? We came to but little explanation. This is needless for reciprocal invectives. There is but one thing to be done, that is, to forget them. There had been no underhand proceedings, none at least that had come to my knowledge. Matters were not as they had been with Madame d'Épinay. He showed me the plan of *Le Père de Famille.* 'This,' said I to him, 'is the best defence of *Le Fils Naturel.* Be silent, give your attention to this piece, and then throw it at the heads of your enemies as the only answer you think proper to make them.' He did so, and was satisfied with what he had done. I had six months before sent him the two first parts of my *Julie,* to have his opinion upon them. He had not yet read the work over. We read a part of it together. He called it all *feuillet* — that was his term, by which he meant loaded with words and redundancies. I myself had already perceived it; but it was the babbling of the fever: I have never been able to correct it. The last parts are different. The fourth especially, and the sixth, are masterpieces of diction.

The day after my arrival he insisted on taking me to sup with Monsieur d'Holbach. We were far from agreeing upon this point, for I wished even to get rid of the bargain for the manuscript on chemistry, for which I was enraged to be obliged to that man.[1] Diderot carried all before him. He swore that Monsieur d'Holbach loved me with all his heart, and said I must forgive him his manner, which was the same to everybody, and more disagreeable to his friends than to others. He observed to me that refusing the produce of this manuscript after having accepted it two years before was an affront to the donor which he had not deserved, and that my refusal might be interpreted into a secret reproach for having

[1] Rousseau gives no other particulars of this affair, and his editors have been unable to throw any light upon it.

waited so long to conclude the bargain. 'I see D'Holbach,' added he, 'every day, and know better than you do the nature of his disposition. Had you reason to be dissatisfied with him, do you think your friend capable of advising you to do a mean thing?' In short, with my accustomed weakness, I suffered myself to be prevailed upon, and we went to sup with the Baron, who received me as he usually had done. But his wife received me coldly, and almost uncivilly.[1] I saw nothing in her which resembled the amiable Caroline who, when a maid, treated me so kindly. I thought I had already perceived that since Grimm had frequented the D'Aine household I had not met there so friendly a reception.

Whilst I was at Paris, Saint-Lambert arrived there from the army. As I was not acquainted with his arrival I did not see him until after my return to the country, first at La Chevrette and afterwards at the Hermitage, to which he came with Madame d'Houdetot, and invited himself to dinner with me. It may be judged whether or not I received him with pleasure! But I felt one still greater at seeing the good understanding between my guests. Satisfied with not having disturbed their happiness, I myself was happy in being a witness to it; and I can safely assert that during the whole of my mad passion, and especially at the moment of which I speak, had it been in my power to take from him Madame d'Houdetot, I would not have done it, nor should I have been so much as tempted to undertake it. I found her so earnest in her love for Saint-Lambert that I could scarcely imagine she would have been as much so had she loved me instead of him; and, without wishing to disturb their union, all that I really desired of her in my moments of passion was that she would permit herself to

[1] This was Baron d'Holbach's second wife, Caroline-Suzanne d'Aine, his deceased wife's sister.

be loved. Finally, however violent my passion may have been for her, I found it as agreeable to be the confidant as the object of her amours; and I never for a moment considered her lover as a rival, but always as my friend. It will be said that this was not love. Be it so; but it was something more.

As for Saint-Lambert, he behaved like an honest and judicious man: as I was the only person culpable, so was I the only one who was punished; this, however, was with the greatest indulgence. He treated me severely, but in a friendly manner, and I perceived I had lost something in his esteem, but not the least part of his friendship. For this I consoled myself, knowing it would be much more easy for me to recover the one than the other, and that he had too much sense to confound an involuntary and fleeting weakness with a vice of character. If even I were in fault in all that had passed, I was but very little so. Had I first sought after his mistress? Had not he himself sent her to me? Did not she come in search of me? Could I avoid receiving her? What could I do? They themselves had done the evil, and I was the person on whom it fell. In my situation they would have done as much as I did, and perhaps more: for, however estimable and faithful Madame d'Houdetot might be, she was still a woman; he was absent; opportunities were frequent, temptations strong, and it would have been very difficult for her always to have defended herself with the same success against a more enterprising man. It was assuredly much, in our situation, that we were able to set boundaries beyond which we never permitted ourselves to pass.

Although at the bottom of my heart I found evidence sufficiently honourable in my favour, so many appearances were against me, that the invincible shame always predominant gave me, in his presence, the appearance of

guilt; and this he took advantage of for the purpose of humbling me: a single circumstance will describe this reciprocal situation. I read to him, after dinner, the letter I had written the preceding year to Voltaire, and of which Saint-Lambert had heard mention. Whilst I was reading he fell asleep; and I, lately so haughty, at present so foolish, dared not stop, and continued to read whilst he continued to snore. Such were my indignities, and such his revenge; but his generosity never permitted him to exercise it except amongst our three selves.

After his return to the army, I found Madame d'Houdetot greatly changed in her manner with me. At this I was as much surprised as if I ought not to have expected it; it affected me more than it ought to have done, and did me considerable harm. It seemed that everything from which I expected a cure plunged still deeper into my heart the dart which I at length broke off rather than drew out.

I was quite determined to conquer myself, and leave no means untried to change my foolish passion into a pure and lasting friendship. For this purpose I had formed the finest projects in the world, for the execution of which the concurrence of Madame d'Houdetot was necessary. When I wished to speak to her, I found her absent and embarrassed; I perceived I was no longer agreeable to her, and that something had passed which she would not communicate to me, and which I have never yet known.[1] This change, and the impossibility of knowing the reason of it, grieved me to the heart. She asked me for her letters; these I returned her with a fidelity which she did me the wrong to doubt for a moment. This doubt was another unexpected wound given

[1] The cause was an anonymous letter, exciting Saint-Lambert's jealousy against Madame d'Houdetot, who was represented as favouring the attentions of Rousseau. It proceeded from Grimm, who worded it in such a way that it might easily be attributed to Jean-Jacques.

to my heart, with which she must have been so well acquainted. She did me justice, but not immediately. I understood that an examination of the packet I had given her made her perceive her error. I saw she reproached herself with it, by which I regained something. She could not take back her letters without returning me mine. She told me she had burned them: of this I dared to doubt in my turn, and I confess I doubt of it at this moment. No; such letters are never thrown into the fire. Those of *Julie* have been found ardent. Heavens! what would have been said of these? No, no; she who can inspire a like passion will never have the courage to burn the proofs of it. But I am not afraid of her having made a bad use of them: of this I do not think her capable; and, besides, I had taken proper measures to prevent it. The foolish but strong apprehension of raillery had made me begin this correspondence in a manner to secure my letters from all communication. I carried the familiarity I permitted myself with her in my intoxication so far as to address her in the singular number: but what *theeing* and *thouing!* she certainly could not be offended with it. Yet she several times complained, but this was always useless: her complaints had no other effect than that of awakening my fears, and I, besides, could not suffer myself to lose ground. If these letters be not yet destroyed, and should they ever be made public, the world will see in what manner I have loved.[1]

The grief caused me by the coldness of Madame d'Houdetot, and the certainty of not having deserved it, made me take the singular resolution to complain of it to Saint-Lambert himself. While waiting the effect of

[1] Madame d'Houdetot is said to have kept back four of these epistles, which she gave to Saint-Lambert, who afterwards burned them. One of them was published by Musset-Pathay in Rousseau's *Correspondance.*

the letter I wrote to him on the subject, I sought dissipations to which I ought sooner to have had recourse. Fêtes were given at La Chevrette, for which I composed music. The pleasure of honouring myself in the eyes of Madame d'Houdetot by a talent she loved warmed my imagination; and another object contributed to give it still more animation: this was the desire the author of *Le Devin du Village* had of showing he understood music; for I had perceived that some persons had, for a considerable time past, endeavoured to render this doubtful, at least with respect to composition. My beginning at Paris, the ordeal through which I had repeatedly passed there, both at the house of Monsieur Dupin and of Monsieur de la Poplinière; the quantity of music I had composed during fourteen years in the midst of the most celebrated masters and before their eyes; finally, the opera of the *Muses Galantes*, and even that of *Le Devin;* a motet I had composed for Mademoiselle Fel, and which she had sung at the Concert Spirituel; the frequent conferences I had had upon this fine art with the first composers, all seemed to prevent or dissipate a doubt of such a nature. This, however, existed even at La Chevrette, and in the mind of Monsieur d'Épinay himself. Without appearing to observe it, I undertook to compose for him a motet for the dedication of the Chapel of La Chevrette, and I begged him to make choice of the words. He directed De Linant, his son's tutor, to furnish me with these. De Linant gave me words proper to the subject, and in a week after I had received them the motet was finished. This time spite was my Apollo, and never did more intelligent music come from my hand. The words began with: 'Ecce sedes hic Tonantis.'[1] The grandeur of the opening is

[1] I have since learned these were by Santeuil, and that Monsieur de Linant had quietly appropriated them to himself. — R.

suitable to the words, and the rest of the motet is so elegantly harmonious that every one was struck with it. I had composed it for a great orchestra. D'Épinay procured the best symphonists. Madame Bruna, an Italian singer, sang the motet, and was well accompanied. The composition succeeded so well that it was afterwards performed at the Concert Spirituel, where, in spite of secret cabals and poor execution, it was twice generally applauded. I gave, for the birthday of Monsieur d'Épinay, the idea of a kind of piece half dramatic and half pantomimical, which Madame d'Épinay worked out, and for which I supplied the music. Grimm, on his arrival, heard some talk of my musical success. An hour afterwards not a word more was said upon the subject; but there no longer remained a doubt — not at least that I know of — of my knowledge of composition.

Grimm was scarcely arrived at La Chevrette — where already I did not find much amusement — before he made it insupportable to me by airs I never before saw in any person, and of which I had no idea. The evening before he came I was dislodged from the best visitor's chamber, contiguous to that of Madame d'Épinay; it was prepared for Grimm, and, instead of it, I was put into another further off. 'Behold,' said I laughingly to Madame d'Épinay, 'how new-comers displace the old.' She seemed embarrassed. I was better acquainted the same evening with the reason for the change, in learning that between her chamber and that I had quitted there was a secret door which she had thought needless to show to me. Her intercourse with Grimm was not unknown either in her own house or to the public, not even to her husband; yet, far from confessing it to me, the confidant of secrets more important to her, and which she was sure would be faithfully kept, she constantly denied it in the strongest manner. I comprehended that this reserve

proceeded from Grimm, who, though intrusted with all my secrets, did not choose I should be the depositary of any of his.

However prejudiced I was in favour of this man by former sentiments, which were not extinguished, and by the real merit he had, all was not proof against the care he took to destroy it. He received me like the Comte de Tuffière;[1] he scarcely deigned to return my salute; he never once spoke to me, and soon showed me that I must not speak to him by not making me any answer; he everywhere passed first, and took the first place, without ever paying me the least attention. All this would have been supportable had he not accompanied it with a shocking affectation, which may be judged of by one example taken from a hundred. One evening Madame d'Épinay, finding herself a little indisposed, ordered some trifle for her supper to be carried into her chamber, and went upstairs to sup by the side of the fire. She asked me to go with her, which I did. Grimm came afterwards. The little table was already placed, and there were but two covers. Supper was served: Madame d'Épinay took her place on one side of the fire; Grimm took an arm-chair, seated himself at the other, drew the little table between them, opened his napkin, and prepared himself for eating without speaking to me a single word. Madame d'Épinay blushed at his behaviour, and, to induce him to repair his rudeness, offered me her place. He said nothing, nor did he even look at me. Not being able to approach the fire I walked about the chamber until a cover was brought. Indisposed as I was, older than himself, longer acquainted in the house than he had been, the person who had introduced him there, and to whom, as favourite of the lady, he ought to have done the honours of it, he suffered me to sup at the end of the

[1] A character in Destouches' comedy *Le Glorieux*.

table, at a distance from the fire, without showing me the least civility. His whole behaviour to me corresponded with this example of it. He did not treat me precisely as his inferior, but he looked upon me as a cipher. I could scarcely recognise the same *cuistre* who, in the house of the Prince de Saxe-Gotha, thought himself honoured when I cast my eyes upon him. I had still more difficulty in reconciling this profound silence and insulting haughtiness with the tender friendship he professed for me to those whom he knew to be real friends. It is true the only proofs he gave of it was pitying my wretched fortune, of which I did not complain; compassionating my sad fate, with which I was satisfied; and lamenting to see me obstinately refuse the benevolent services that he said he wished to render me. Thus was it that he artfully made the world admire his affectionate generosity, blame my ungrateful misanthropy, and insensibly accustomed people to imagine there was nothing more between a protector like him and a poor creature like myself than a connection founded upon benefactions on one part and obligations on the other, without once thinking of a friendship between equals. For my part, I have vainly sought to discover in what way I was under an obligation to this new protector. I had lent him money, he had never lent me any; I had attended him in his illness, he scarcely came to see me in mine; I had given him all my friends, he never had given me any of his. I had said everything I could in his favour, and he — if ever he has spoken of me, it has been less publicly and in another manner. He has never either rendered or offered me the least service of any kind. How, therefore, was he my Mæcenas? In what manner was I protected by him? This was incomprehensible to me, and still remains so.

It is true, he was more or less arrogant with every-

body, but with none so brutally as with me. I remember Saint-Lambert once ready to throw a plate at his head, upon his indirectly giving him the lie at the table by vulgarly saying, 'That is not true.' With his naturally imperious manner, he had the self-sufficiency of an upstart, and became ridiculous by being extravagantly impertinent. An intercourse with the great had so far intoxicated him that he gave himself airs which none but the least intelligent among them ever assume. He never called his lackey but by 'Eh!' as if, amongst the number of his servants, my lord had not known which was in waiting. When he sent him to buy anything, he threw the money upon the ground instead of putting it into his hand. In short, entirely forgetting he was a man, he treated him with such shocking contempt and so cruel a disdain in everything, that the poor lad, a very good creature, whom Madame d'Épinay had recommended, quitted his service without any other complaint than that of the impossibility of enduring such treatment. This was the La Fleur of this new Glorieux.

As foolish as he was vain, with his great wandering eyes and his misshapen countenance, he posed as an admirer of the ladies; and after the farce that he enacted when rejected by Mademoiselle Fel, he passed with many of them for a man of noble sentiments. This had obtained for him a certain vogue, and had given him a taste for effeminate neatness: he began to act the beau; his toilette became an affair of much importance; all the world knew that he used cosmetics; and I, who at first refused to credit this, commenced to believe it, not only because of his fine colour, and from having observed receptacles for white ceruse on his dressing-table, but from finding him engaged on my entrance one morning in rubbing his nails with a little brush, made for the purpose, a task which he continued to perform in my

presence. I was of opinion that a man who could spend two hours daily in rubbing his nails was very likely to spend a few minutes in filling up the wrinkles in his skin. The bonhomme Gauffecourt, who was by no means malicious, had, not unhappily, given him the nickname of Tiran le Blanc.

All these things were nothing more than ridiculous, but, being quite opposite to my character, they contributed to render his suspicious to me. I could easily imagine that a man whose head was so much deranged could not have a heart well placed. He piqued himself upon nothing so much as upon sensibility of mind and true sentiment. How could this agree with defects which are peculiar to little minds? How can the continued overflowings of a susceptible heart suffer it to be incessantly employed in so many little cares relative to the person? Heaven knows that he who feels his heart inflamed with this celestial fire strives to diffuse it, and wishes to show what he internally is. He would wish to place his heart in his countenance, and could not conceive of other paint for his cheeks.

I remembered the summary of his morality which Madame d'Épinay had mentioned to me and adopted. This consisted in one single article: that the sole duty of man is to follow all the inclinations of his heart. This morality, when I heard it mentioned, gave me great matter of reflection, although I at first considered it solely as a play of wit. But I soon perceived that this principle was really the rule of his conduct, of which I afterwards had, at my cost, but too many convincing proofs. This is the interior doctrine that Diderot has so frequently intimated to me, but which I never heard him explain.

I remember having several years before been frequently told that this man was false, that he had nothing

more than the appearance of sentiment, and particularly that he did not love me. I recollected several little anecdotes which I had heard of him from Monsieur de Francueil and Madame de Chenonceaux, neither of whom esteemed him, and to whom he must have been known, as Madame de Chenonceaux was daughter to Madame de Rochechouart, the intimate friend of the late Comte de Friese, and that Monsieur de Francueil, at that time very intimate with the Vicomte de Polignac, had lived a good deal at the Palais-Royal precisely when Grimm began to introduce himself there. All Paris heard of his despair after the death of the Vicomte de Friese. It was necessary to support the reputation he had acquired after the rigours of Mademoiselle Fel, and of which I, more than any other person, should have seen the imposture had I then been less blind. He had to be dragged to the Hôtel de Castries, where he worthily played his part, abandoned to the most mortal affliction. There he every morning went into the garden to weep at his ease, holding before his eyes his handkerchief moistened with tears as long as he was in sight of the hotel; but, at the turning of a certain alley, people of whom he little thought saw him instantly put his handkerchief into his pocket and take out a book. This observation, which was repeatedly made, soon became public in Paris, and was almost as soon forgotten. I myself had forgotten it — a circumstance in which I was concerned brought it to my recollection. I was at the point of death in my bed in the Rue de Grenelle; he was in the country; he came one morning, quite out of breath, to see me, saying he had arrived in town that very instant; a moment afterwards I learned that he had arrived the evening before, and had been seen at the theatre.

I heard a thousand things of the same kind; but an observation, which I was surprised not to have made

sooner, struck me more than everything else. I had given to Grimm all my friends without exception; they were become his. I was so inseparable from him that I should have had some difficulty in continuing to visit at a house where he was not received. Madame de Créqui was the only person who refused to admit him into her company, and whom, for that reason, I have seldom seen since. Grimm, on his part, made himself other friends, as well by his own means as by those of the Comte de Friese. Of all these, not one of them ever became my friend; he never said a word to induce me even to become acquainted with them, and not one of those I sometimes met at his apartments ever showed me the least good-will; the Comte de Friese, in whose house he lived, and with whom it consequently would have been agreeable to me to form some connection, not excepted, nor the Comte de Schomberg, his relation, with whom Grimm was still more intimate.

More than this, my own friends, whom I made his, and who were all tenderly attached to me before this acquaintance, were sensibly changed the moment it was made. He never gave me one of his; I gave him all mine, and he ended by taking them all from me. If these be the effects of friendship, what are those of enmity?

Diderot himself told me several times at the beginning that Grimm, in whom I had so much confidence, was not my friend. He changed his language subsequently, when he was no longer so himself.

The manner in which I had disposed of my children wanted not the concurrence of any person. Yet I informed some of my friends of it, solely to make it known to them, and that I might not in their eyes appear better than I was. These friends were three in number — Diderot, Grimm, and Madame d'Épinay. Duclos, the most worthy of my confidence, was the only real friend

whom I did not inform of it. He nevertheless knew what I had done. By whom? I know not. It is not very probable that the perfidy came from Madame d'Épinay, who knew that by following her example, had I been capable of doing it, I had in my power the means of a cruel revenge. It remains, therefore, between Grimm and Diderot, then so much united, especially against me, and it is probable that this crime was common to them both. I would lay a wager that Duclos, to whom I never told my secret, and who consequently was under no restraint, is the only person who has not disclosed it.

Grimm and Diderot, in their project to take from me the *gouverneuses*, had used the greatest efforts to make Duclos enter into their views; this he disdainfully refused to do. It was not until some time afterwards that I learned from him what had passed between them on the subject; but I learned at the time from Thérèse enough to perceive that there was some secret design, and that they wished to dispose of me, if not against my own consent, at least without my knowledge, or had an intention of making these two persons serve as instruments of some project they had in view. This was far from upright conduct. The opposition of Duclos is a convincing proof of it. They who think proper may believe it to be friendship.

This pretended friendship was as fatal to me at home as it was abroad. The long and frequent conversations with Madame Le Vasseur for several years past had made a sensible change in this woman's behaviour to me, and the change was far from being in my favour. What was the subject of these singular conversations? Why such a profound mystery? Was the conversation of that old woman agreeable enough to take her into favour, and of sufficient importance to make it so great a secret? During the two or three years these colloquies had, from

time to time, been continued, they had appeared to me ridiculous; but when I thought of them again, they began to astonish me. This astonishment would have been carried to inquietude had I then known what this old woman was preparing for me.

Notwithstanding the pretended zeal for my welfare of which Grimm made such a public boast, difficult to reconcile with the airs he gave himself when we were together, I heard nothing of him from any quarter the least to my advantage, and his feigned commiseration tended less to do me service than to render me contemptible. He deprived me as much as he possibly could of the resource I found in the employment I had chosen by decrying me as a bad copyist, and I confess that he spoke the truth; but, in this case, it was not for him to do it. He proved himself in earnest by employing another copyist, and by depriving me of as many patrons as he could persuade to dismiss me. His intention might have been supposed to be that of reducing me to a dependence upon him and his credit for subsistence, and to cut off the latter until I was brought to that degree of distress.

All things considered, my reason imposed silence upon my former prejudice, which still pleaded in his favour. I judged his character to be at least suspicious; and with respect to his friendship, I positively decided it to be false. I then resolved to see him no more, and informed Madame d'Épinay of the resolution I had taken, supporting it with several unanswerable facts, which I have now forgotten.

She strongly combated my resolution, without knowing how to reply to the reasons on which it was founded. She had not concerted with him; but the next day, instead of explaining herself verbally, she gave me a very skilfully composed letter they had drawn up together, and by which, without entering into a detail of facts, she

justified him by his reserved and meditative character, attributed to me as a crime my having suspected him of perfidy towards his friend, and exhorted me to come to an accommodation with him. This letter staggered me. In a conversation we afterwards had together, and in which I found her better prepared than she had been the first time, I suffered myself to be quite prevailed upon, and was inclined to believe I might have judged erroneously. In this case I thought I really had done a friend a very serious injury, which it was my duty to repair. In short, as I had already done several times with Diderot and the Baron d'Holbach, half from inclination, and half from weakness, I made all the advances I had a right to require. I went to Monsieur Grimm, like another George Dandin, to make him my apologies for the offence he had given me, still in the false persuasion — which, in the course of my life, has made me guilty of a thousand meannesses to my pretended friends — that there is no hatred which may not be disarmed by mildness and fair behaviour; whereas, on the contrary, the hatred of the wicked becomes still more envenomed by the impossibility of finding anything to found it upon, and the sentiment of their own injustice is but another cause of offence against the person who is the object of it. I have, without going further than my own history, a very strong proof of this maxim in Grimm and in Tronchin: both become my most implacable enemies from inclination, pleasure, and fancy, without having been able to charge me with having done either of them the most trifling injury,[1] and whose rage, like that of tigers, becomes daily more fierce by the facility of satiating it.

[1] I did not give the surname of Jongleur to the latter until long after his declared hostility, and the bitter persecutions he brought upon me at Geneva and elsewhere. I even quickly suppressed the name when I perceived that I was entirely his victim. Mean vengeance is unworthy of my heart, and hatred never takes the least root in it. — R.

I expected that Grimm, confused by my condescension and advances, would receive me with open arms and the most tender friendship. He received me as a Roman Emperor would have done, and with a haughtiness I never saw in any person but himself. I was by no means prepared for such a reception. When, in the embarrassment of the unaccustomed part I had to act, I had, in a few words and with a timid air, fulfilled the object which had brought me to him, before he received me into favour he pronounced, with a deal of majesty, a harangue that he had prepared, and which contained a long enumeration of his rare virtues, and especially those connected with friendship. He laid great stress upon a thing which at first struck me a good deal — this was his having always preserved the same friends. Whilst he was yet speaking I said to myself it would be cruel for me to be the only exception to this rule. He returned to the subject so frequently, and with such emphasis, that I thought if in this he followed nothing but the sentiments of his heart he would be less struck with the maxim, and that he made of it an art useful to his views, by procuring the means of accomplishing them. Until then I had been in the same situation; I had preserved all my first friends, even from my tenderest infancy, without having lost one of them except by death, and yet I had never before made the reflection. It was not a maxim that I had prescribed to myself. Since, therefore, the advantage was common to both, why did he boast of it in preference, if he had not previously intended to deprive me of the merit? He afterwards endeavoured to humble me by proofs of the preference our common friends gave to him over me. With this I was as well acquainted as himself; the question was by what means had he obtained it — whether by merit or address? by exalting himself, or endeavouring to abase me? At last, when he had placed

between us all the distance that could add to the value of the favour he was about to confer, he granted me the kiss of peace, in a slight embrace which resembled the accolade which the King gives to new-made knights. I was stupefied with surprise; I knew not what to say; not a word could I utter. This whole scene had the appearance of the reprimand a preceptor gives to his pupil, while he graciously spares the rod. I never think of it without perceiving to what degree judgments founded upon appearances, to which the vulgar give so much weight, are deceitful, and how frequently audacity and pride are found in the guilty, and shame and embarrassment in the innocent.

We were reconciled. This was a relief to my heart, which every kind of quarrel fills with anguish. It will naturally be supposed that a reconciliation of this kind changed nothing in his manners; all it effected was to deprive me of the right of complaining of them. For this reason I took a resolution to endure everything, and for the future to say not a word.

So many successive vexations overwhelmed me to such a degree as to leave me but little power over my mind. Receiving no answer from Saint-Lambert, neglected by Madame d'Houdetot, and no longer daring to open my heart to any person, I began to be afraid that by making friendship my idol I had been sacrificing my whole life to chimeras. Experience proved that of all my intimate acquaintances there remained but two men who had preserved my esteem, and in whom my heart could confide: Duclos, of whom since my retreat to the Hermitage I had lost sight, and Saint-Lambert. I thought the only means of repairing the wrongs I had done the latter was to unbosom myself without reserve; and I resolved to confess to him everything, taking care, however, that his mistress should not be compromised. I have no doubt but

this was another snare of my passion to keep me nearer to her person; but I should certainly have had no reserve with her lover, entirely submitting to his direction, and carrying sincerity as far as it was possible to do it. I was on the point of writing to him a second letter, to which I was certain he would have returned an answer, when I learned the melancholy cause of his silence relative to the first. He had been unable to support until the end the fatigues of the campaign. Madame d'Épinay informed me that he had had an attack of the palsy, and Madame d'Houdetot, whose affliction was so great that she herself became ill, and was unable to reply at once, wrote to me two or three days afterwards from Paris, saying that he was going to Aix-la-Chapelle to take the benefit of the waters. I will not say that this melancholy circumstance afflicted me as it did her; but I am of opinion that my grief of heart was as painful as her tears. The pain of knowing him to be in such a state, increased by the fear lest inquietude should have contributed to occasion it, affected me more than anything that had yet happened, and I felt most cruelly a want of fortitude, which in my estimation was necessary to enable me to support so many misfortunes. Happily this generous friend did not long leave me so greatly overwhelmed: he did not forget me, notwithstanding his attack; and I soon learned from himself that I had ill-judged his sentiments, and been too much alarmed for his situation. It is now time to come to the grand revolution of my destiny, to the catastrophe which has divided my life into two parts so different from each other, and which, from a very trifling cause, produced such terrible effects.

One day, little thinking of what was to happen, Madame d'Épinay sent for me. The moment I saw her I perceived in her eyes and whole countenance an appearance of uneasiness, which struck me the more as this was

not customary, nobody knowing better than she did how to govern their features and movements. 'My friend,' said she to me, 'I am going to set off for Geneva; my chest is in a bad state, and my health is so deranged that I must go and consult Tronchin.' I was the more astonished at this resolution, so suddenly taken, and at the beginning of the bad season of the year, as thirty-six hours before she had not, when I left her, said anything of the matter. I asked her whom she would take with her. She said her son and Monsieur de Linant; and afterwards carelessly added, 'And you, my dear bear, will not you go also?' As I did not think she spoke seriously, knowing that at that season of the year I was scarcely in a situation to leave my chamber, I jested upon the utility of the company of one sick person to another. She herself had not seemed to make the proposition seriously, and here the matter dropped. The rest of our conversation ran upon the necessary preparations for her journey, about which she busied herself eagerly, being determined to set off within a fortnight.

I needed little penetration to perceive that some circumstance which was concealed from me was the secret motive of this journey. This circumstance — which was no secret to any one in the house save me — was discovered next day by Thérèse, to whom Tessier, the maître d'hôtel, who had learned it from the femme de chambre, revealed it.[1] Though under no obligation to Madame d'Épinay to keep this secret, as I was not told it by her, it is too closely related to others that were confided to me to permit a disentanglement; on this head I shall therefore be mute. But these secrets, which never have been

[1] Madame d'Épinay was then enceinte. The motives for Grimm's conduct at this juncture, and other circumstances that our author leaves unexplained, are fully set forth in Musset-Pathay's *Histoire de la Vie de Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, Paris, 1827 — a work which gives the result of much acuteness and research.

and never will be disclosed by me either in speech or writing, have been known to so many persons that none in Madame d'Épinay's circle can be ignorant of them.

Had I been informed respecting the true motive of this journey, I should have detected the hidden action of a hostile hand in the attempt to make me play the chaperon to Madame d'Épinay; but she had pressed the matter so faintly that I persisted in refusing to regard the project seriously, and only laughed at the fine figure I should have cut had I been so foolish as to acquiesce. However, she was a gainer by my refusal, for she succeeded in getting her husband to accompany her.

A few days afterwards I received from Diderot the note I am going to transcribe. This note, simply doubled up, so that the contents could be easily read, was addressed to me at Madame d'Épinay's and sent to the care of Monsieur de Linant, tutor to the son and confidant to the mother.

NOTE FROM DIDEROT (A, No. 52).

'I am naturally disposed to love you, and am born to give you trouble. I am informed that Madame d'Épinay is going to Geneva, and do not hear that you are to accompany her. My friend, if you are satisfied with Madame d'Épinay, you must go with her; if dissatisfied, you ought still less to hesitate. Do you find the weight of the obligations you have received from her burdensome to you? This is an opportunity of discharging a part of them, and relieving your mind. Do you ever expect another opportunity like the present one of giving her proofs of your gratitude? She is going to a country where she will be quite a stranger. She is ill, and will stand in need of amusement and dissipation. The winter season too — consider, my friend. Your ill state of health may be a much greater objection than I think it is; but are you now more indisposed than you were a month ago, or than you will be at the beginning of spring? Will you, three months hence, be in a situation to perform the journey more comfortably than at present? For my part, I cannot but observe to you that

were I unable to bear the shaking of the carriage, I would take my staff and follow her. Have you no fears too lest your conduct should be misinterpreted? You will be suspected of ingratitude or of some other secret motive. I well know that, let you do as you will, you will have in your favour the testimony of your conscience; but will this alone be sufficient, and is it permitted to neglect to a certain degree the opinion of others? What I now write, my good friend, is to acquit myself of what I think I owe to us both. Should my letter displease you, throw it into the fire and forget that it was ever written. I salute, love, and embrace you.'

Although trembling and almost blind with rage whilst I read this epistle, so much so, indeed, that I could hardly finish it, I remarked the address with which Diderot affected a milder and more polite language than he had done in his former ones, wherein he never went farther than 'my dear,' without ever deigning to add the name of 'friend.' I easily discovered the second-hand means by which the letter was conveyed to me; the superscription, manner, and form awkwardly betrayed the manœuvre, for we commonly wrote to each other by post, or by the Montmorency messenger, and this was the first and only time he sent me his letter by this channel.

As soon as the first transports of my indignation permitted me to write, I, with great precipitation, wrote him the following answer, which I immediately carried from the Hermitage, where I then was, to La Chevrette, to show it to Madame d'Épinay, to whom in my blind rage I desired to read the contents, as well as the letter from Diderot.

'You cannot, my dear friend, either know the magnitude of the obligations I am under to Madame d'Épinay, to what a degree I am bound by them, whether she is desirous of my accompanying her, whether this is possible, or the reasons I may have for my non-compliance. I have no objection to discuss all these points with you; but you will in the meantime confess that prescribing to me so positively what I ought

to do, without first enabling yourself to judge of the matter, is, my dear philosopher, acting most inconsiderately. What is still worse, I perceive the opinion you give comes not from yourself. Besides my being but little disposed to suffer myself to be led by the nose under your name by any third or fourth person, I observe in this secondary advice certain underhand dealing, which ill agrees with your candour, and from which you will, on your account as well as mine, do well in future to abstain.

'You are afraid my conduct should be misinterpreted, but I defy a heart like yours to think ill of mine. Others would, perhaps, speak better of me if I resembled them more. God preserve me from gaining their approbation! Let the vile and wicked watch over my conduct and misinterpret my actions, Rousseau is not a man to be afraid of them, nor is Diderot one to hearken to them.

'If I am displeased with your letter, you wish me to throw it into the fire, and pay no attention to the contents. Do you imagine that anything coming from you can be forgotten in such a manner? You hold, my dear friend, my tears as cheap in the pain you give me as you do my life and health in the cares you exhort me to undertake. Could you but break yourself of this your friendship would be more pleasing to me, and I should be less to be pitied.'

On entering the chamber of Madame d'Épinay I found Grimm with her, at which I was highly delighted. I read to them, in a loud and clear voice, the two letters, with an intrepidity of which I should not have thought myself capable, and concluded with a few observations not out of keeping with it. At this unexpected audacity in a man generally timid they were struck dumb with surprise. I perceived that arrogant man look down upon the ground, not daring to meet my eyes, which sparkled with indignation; but in the bottom of his heart he from that instant resolved upon my destruction, and I am certain that they concerted measures to that effect before they separated.

It was much about this time that I at length received,

through Madame d'Houdetot, the answer from Saint-Lambert (A, No. 57) — dated from Wolfenbuttel, a few days after his accident — to my letter, which had been long delayed upon the road. This answer gave me the consolation of which I then stood so much in need; it was full of assurance of esteem and friendship, and these gave me strength and courage to deserve them. From that moment I did my duty; but certainly had Saint-Lambert been less reasonable, generous, and honest, I was inevitably lost.

The season became bad, and people began to quit the country. Madame d'Houdetot informed me of the day on which she intended to come and bid adieu to the valley, and gave me a rendezvous at Eaubonne. This happened to be the same day on which Madame d'Épinay left La Chevrette to go to Paris for the purpose of completing the preparations for her journey. Fortunately she set off in the morning, and I had still time to go and dine with her sister-in-law. I had the letter from Saint-Lambert in my pocket, and read it over several times as I walked along. This letter served me as a shield against my weakness. I made and kept to the resolution of seeing nothing in Madame d'Houdetot but my friend and the mistress of Saint-Lambert, and I passed four or five hours in a most delicious calm, infinitely preferable, even with respect to enjoyment, to those attacks of a burning fever which always, until that moment, I had had when in her presence. As she too well knew that my heart was not changed, she was sensible of the efforts I made to conquer myself, and esteemed me the more for them, and I had the pleasure of perceiving that her friendship for me was not extinguished. She announced to me the approaching return of Saint-Lambert, who, although fairly recovered from his attack, was unable to bear the fatigues of war, and was quitting the service, to come and

live in peace with her. We formed the charming project of an intimate connection among us three, and had reason to hope that it would be lasting, since it was founded upon every sentiment by which honest and susceptible hearts could be united; and we had moreover amongst us all the knowledge and talents necessary to be sufficient to ourselves, without the aid of any foreign supplement. Alas! in abandoning myself to the hope of so agreeable a life, I little suspected that which awaited me.

We afterwards spoke of my situation with Madame d'Épinay. I showed her the letter from Diderot, with my answer to it; I related to her everything that had passed upon the subject, and declared to her my resolution of quitting the Hermitage. This she vehemently opposed, and by reasons all-powerful over my heart. She expressed to me how much she could have wished I had been of the party to Geneva, foreseeing she should inevitably be considered as having caused the refusal, which the letter of Diderot seemed previously to announce. However, as she was as well aware of my reasons as I myself, she did not insist upon this point, but conjured me to avoid coming to an open rupture, let it cost me what mortification it would, and to palliate my refusal by reasons sufficiently plausible to banish all unjust suspicions of her having been the cause of it. I told her the task she imposed on me was not easy, but that, resolved to expiate my fault at the expense of my reputation, I would give the preference to hers in everything that honour permitted me to suffer. It will soon be seen whether or not I fulfilled this engagement.

My passion was so far from having lost any part of its force, that I never in my life loved my Sophie so ardently and tenderly as on that day; but such was the impression made upon me by the letter of Saint-Lambert, the sentiment of my duty, and the horror in which I held perfidy,

that during the whole time of the interview my senses left me in peace, and I was not so much as tempted to kiss her hand. At parting she embraced me before her servants. This embrace, so different from those I had sometimes stolen from her under the foliage, proved that I was become master of myself; and I am certain that had my mind, undisturbed, had time to acquire more firmness, three months would have cured me radically.

Here end my personal connections with Madame d'Houdetot — connections of which each has been able to judge by appearances according to the disposition of his own heart, but in which the passion inspired in me by that amiable woman, the most lively passion perhaps that man ever felt, will be honourable in our own consciences by the rare and painful sacrifice we both made to duty, honour, love, and friendship. We each had too high an opinion of the other easily to suffer ourselves to do anything derogatory to our dignity. We must have been unworthy of all esteem had we not set a proper value upon one like this; and the very energy of the sentiments which might have rendered us culpable was that which prevented us from becoming so.

Thus after a long friendship for one of these women, and the strongest affection for the other, I bade them both adieu on the same day — to one, never to see her more; to the other, to see her again but twice, upon occasions of which I shall hereafter speak.

After their departure, I found myself much embarrassed to fulfil so many pressing and contradictory duties, the consequences of my imprudence. Had I been in my natural situation, after the proposition and refusal of the journey to Geneva, I had only to remain quiet, and everything was as it should be. But I had foolishly made of it an affair which could not remain in the state it was, and an explanation was absolutely necessary,

unless I quitted the Hermitage, which I had just promised Madame d'Houdetot not to do, at least for the present. Moreover, she had required me to make known the reasons for my refusal to my pretended friends, that it might not be imputed to her. Yet I could not state the true reason without doing an outrage to Madame d'Épinay, who certainly had a right to my gratitude for what she had done for me. Everything well considered, I found myself reduced to the severe but indispensable necessity of failing in respect either to Madame d'Épinay, to Madame d'Houdetot, or to myself, and it was the last whom I resolved to make my victim. This I did without hesitation, openly and fully, and with so much generosity as to make the act worthy of expiating the faults which had reduced me to such an extremity. This sacrifice, taken advantage of by my enemies, and which they perhaps expected, has ruined my reputation, and, by their assiduity, deprived me of the esteem of the public; but it has restored to me my own, and given me consolation in my misfortunes. This, as will hereafter appear, is not the last time I made such a sacrifice, nor that advantage was taken of it to do me an injury.

Grimm was the only person who appeared to have taken no part in the affair, and it was to him that I determined to address myself. I wrote him a long letter, in which I set forth the ridiculousness of considering it as my duty to accompany Madame d'Épinay to Geneva, the inutility of the measure, and the embarrassment even it would have caused her, besides the inconvenience to myself. I could not resist the temptation of letting him perceive in this letter how fully I was informed, and that to me it appeared singular I should be expected to undertake the journey while he himself dispensed with it, and that his name was never mentioned. This letter, wherein, on account of my not being able clearly to state my

reasons, I was often obliged to wander from the text, would have rendered me culpable in the eyes of the public; but it was a model of reservedness and discretion for the people who, like Grimm, were fully acquainted with the things I forbore to mention, and which completely justified my conduct. I did not even hesitate to raise another prejudice against myself in attributing the advice of Diderot to my other friends. This I did to insinuate that Madame d'Houdetot had been of the same opinion, as she really was; and in not mentioning that, upon the reasons I gave her, she thought differently, I could not better remove the suspicion of her having connived at my proceedings than by appearing dissatisfied with her behaviour.

This letter was concluded by an act of confidence which would have had an effect upon any other man, for, in desiring Grimm to weigh my reasons and afterwards to give me his opinion, I informed him that, let this be what it would, I should act accordingly — and such was my intention, had he even thought I ought to set off; for, Monsieur d'Épinay having appointed himself the conductor of his wife, my going with them would then have had a different appearance, whereas it was I who, in the first place, was asked to take upon me that employment, and he was out of the question until after my refusal.

The answer from Grimm was slow in coming. It was singular enough, on which account I will here transcribe it. (See A, No. 59.)

† 'The departure of Madame d'Épinay is postponed. Her son is ill, and it is necessary to wait until his health is re-established. I will consider the contents of your letter. Remain quiet at your Hermitage. I will send you my opinion in good time. As she will certainly not set off for some days there is no immediate occasion for it. In the meantime you may, if you think proper, make her your offers, although this to

me seems a matter of indifference. For, knowing your situation as well as you do yourself, I doubt not of her returning to your offers such an answer as she ought to do; and all the advantage which, in my opinion, can result from this will be your having it in your power to say to those by whom you may be importuned that your not being of the travelling party was not for want of offers made to that effect. Moreover, I do not see why you will absolutely have it that the philosopher is the speaking-trumpet of all the world, nor, because he is of opinion that you ought to go, why you should imagine that all your friends think as he does. If you write to Madame d'Épinay her answer will be yours to all your friends, since you have it so much at heart to give them all an answer. Adieu. I embrace Madame Le Vasseur and *Le Criminel.*' [1]

Stricken with astonishment at reading this letter, I vainly endeavoured to find out what it meant. However, instead of answering me with simplicity, he took time to consider of what I had written, as if the time he had already taken were not sufficient. He intimates even the state of suspense in which he wishes to keep me, as if a profound problem were to be resolved, or that it was of importance to his views to deprive me of every means of comprehending his intentions until the moment when he should think proper to make them known. What therefore did he mean by these precautions, delays, and mysteries? Is it thus that confidence should be reciprocated? Is this manner of acting consistent with honour and uprightness? I vainly sought for some favourable interpretation of his conduct. It was impossible to find one. Whatever his design might be, were this inimical to me, his situation facilitated the execution of it without its being possible for me in mine to oppose the least obstacle. Enjoying favour in the house of a great prince,

[1] Monsieur Le Vasseur, whose wife governed him rather rudely, called her the 'Lieutenant-Criminel.' Grimm jestingly gave the same name to the daughter, and, by way of abridgment, was pleased to retrench the first word.

having an extensive acquaintance, and giving the tone to common circles of which he was the oracle, he had it in his power, with his usual address, to dispose everything as he pleased; and I, alone in my Hermitage, far removed from all society, without the benefit of advice, and having no communication with the world, had nothing to do but to wait in peace. All I did was to write to Madame d'Épinay upon the illness of her son as polite a letter as could be written, but in which I did not fall into the snare of offering to accompany her to Geneva.

After waiting for a long time in the cruel uncertainty into which that barbarous man had plunged me, I learned, at the expiration of eight or ten days, that Madame d'Épinay had set off, and received from him a second letter. It contained not more than seven or eight lines, which I did not entirely read. It was a rupture, but in such terms as the most infernal hatred only can dictate, and these became unmeaning by the excessive degree of acrimony with which he wished to charge them. He forbade me his presence as he would have forbidden me his states. All that was wanting to his letter to make it laughable was that it should be read over with coolness. Without taking a copy of it, or reading the whole of the contents, I returned it him immediately, accompanied by the following note: —

'I refused to admit the force of the just reasons that I had for distrust. Now, when it is too late, I am become sufficiently acquainted with your character.

'This then is the letter upon which you took time to meditate. I return it to you; it is not for me. You may show mine to the whole world, and hate me openly. This on your part will be a falsehood the less.'

My telling him that he might show my preceding letter related to an article in his by which his profound address throughout the whole affair may be judged of.

I have observed that my letter might inculpate me in the eyes of persons unacquainted with the particulars of what had passed. This he was delighted to discover; but how was he to take advantage of it without exposing himself? By showing the letter he ran the risk of being reproached for abusing the confidence of his friend.

To relieve himself from this embarrassment he resolved to break with me in the most pointed manner possible, and to set forth in his letter the favour he did me in not showing mine. He was certain that in my indignation and anger I should refuse his feigned discretion, and permit him to show my letter to everybody. This was what he wished for, and everything turned out as he had expected it would. He sent my letter all over Paris, with his own commentaries upon it, which, however, were not so successful as he expected them to be. It was not judged that the permission he had extorted to make my letter public exempted him from the blame of having so lightly taken me at my word to do me an injury. People continually asked what personal complaints he had against me to authorise so violent a hatred. Finally, it was thought that even if my behaviour had been such as to authorise him to break with me, friendship, although extinguished, had rights which he ought to have respected. But unfortunately Paris is frivolous; remarks of the moment are soon forgotten, the absent and unfortunate are neglected, the man who prospers secures favour by his presence, the intriguing and malicious support each other, renew their vile efforts, and the effects of these, incessantly succeeding each other, efface everything by which they were preceded.

Thus, after having so long deceived me, this man threw aside his mask, convinced that, in the state to which he had brought things, he no longer stood in need of it.

Relieved from the fear of being unjust towards the wretch, I left him to his own reflections, and thought no more of him. A week afterwards I received an answer from Madame d'Épinay, dated from Geneva (B, No. 10). I understood by the tone which she assumed, for the first time in her life, that both, depending upon the success of their measures, acted in concert, and, considering me as a man inevitably lost, intended to give themselves the pleasure of completing my destruction.

In fact, my situation was deplorable. I perceived all my friends withdrawing themselves from me without my knowing how or why. Diderot, who boasted of the continuance of his attachment, and who for three months past had promised me a visit, did not come. The winter began to make its appearance, and brought with it my habitual disorders. My constitution, although vigorous, had been unequal to the combat of so many opposite passions. I was so exhausted that I had neither strength nor courage sufficient to resist the most trifling indisposition. Had my engagements and the continued remonstrances of Diderot and Madame d'Houdetot then permitted me to quit the Hermitage, I knew not where to go, nor in what manner to drag myself along. I remained stupid and immovable, powerless for action or thought. The mere idea of a step to take, of a letter to write, or a word to say, made me tremble; I could not, however, refrain from replying to the letter of Madame d'Épinay without acknowledging myself to be worthy of the treatment with which she and her friend overwhelmed me. I determined upon notifying to her my sentiments and resolutions, not doubting for a moment that from humanity, generosity, propriety, and the good sentiments that I imagined I had observed in her, notwithstanding her bad ones, she would immediately subscribe to them. My letter was as follows: —

'The Hermitage, *23rd Nov.*, 1757.

'Were it possible to die of grief, I should not now be alive. But I have at length decided what to do. Friendship, madame, is extinguished between us, but that which no longer exists still has its rights, and I respect them. I have not forgotten your goodness to me; and you may, on my part, expect as much gratitude as it is possible to have towards a person I must no longer love. All further explanation would be useless. I have in my favour my own conscience, and I ask you to consult your own.

'I wished to quit the Hermitage, and I ought to have done it; but I am told that I must stay there until spring; and since my friends desire it I will remain there until that season, if you will consent.'

After writing and despatching this letter, all I thought of was remaining quiet at the Hermitage, and taking care of my health; of endeavouring to recover my strength, and taking measures to remove in the spring without noise or making the rupture public. But these were not the intentions either of Grimm or of Madame d'Épinay, as will presently appear.

A few days afterwards I had the pleasure of receiving from Diderot the visit he had so frequently promised, and in which he had as constantly failed. He could not have come more opportunely: he was my oldest friend, almost the only one who remained to me; the pleasure I felt in seeing him, as things were circumstanced, may easily be imagined. My heart was full, and I disclosed it to him. I explained to him several facts, which either had not come to his knowledge, or had been disguised or falsified. I informed him, as far as I could do it with propriety, of all that had passed. I did not affect to conceal from him that with which he was but too well acquainted, that a passion equally unreasonable and unfortunate had been the cause of my destruction; but I never acknowledged that Madame d'Houdetot had been

made acquainted with it, or that I had declared it to her. I mentioned to him the unworthy manœuvres of Madame d'Épinay to intercept the innocent letters her sister-in-law wrote me. I was determined that he should hear the particulars from the mouth of the persons whom she had attempted to seduce. Thérèse related them with great precision; but what was my astonishment when the mother came to speak, and I heard her declare and maintain that nothing of this had come to her knowledge! These were her words, from which she would never depart. Not four days before, she herself had recited to me all the particulars, and in presence of my friend she contradicted me to my face. This, to me, was decisive, and I then clearly saw my imprudence in having for so long a time kept such a woman near me. I made no use of invective; I scarcely deigned to speak to her a few words of contempt. I felt what I owed to the daughter, whose steadfast uprightness was a perfect contrast to the base manœuvres of the mother. But from that moment my resolution was taken relative to the old woman, and I waited for nothing but to put it into execution.

This presented itself sooner than I expected. On the 10th of December I received from Madame d'Épinay the following answer to my preceding letter (B, No. 11): —

'GENEVA, *1st December*, 1757.

'After having for several years given you every possible sign of friendship and kindly interest, all I can now do is to pity you. You are very unhappy. I wish your conscience may be as calm as mine; this may be necessary to the repose of your whole life.

'Since you determined to quit the Hermitage, and were persuaded that you ought to do it, I am astonished your friends have prevailed upon you to stay there. For my part, I never consult mine upon my duty, and I have nothing further to say to you upon your own.'

Such an unforeseen dismission, and so plainly pronounced, left me not a moment to hesitate. It was necessary to quit immediately, let the weather and my health be in what state they might, although I were to sleep in the woods, and upon the snow, with which the ground was then covered, and in defiance of everything Madame d'Houdetot might say; for I was willing to do everything to please her except render myself infamous.

I never had been so embarrassed in my whole life as I then was; but my resolution was taken. I swore, let what would happen, not to sleep at the Hermitage on the night of that day week. I began to prepare for sending away my effects, resolving to leave them in the open field rather than not give up the key by the end of the week; for I was determined everything should be done before a letter could be written to Geneva, and an answer to it received. I never felt myself so inspired with courage; I had recovered all my strength. Honour and indignation, upon which Madame d'Épinay had not calculated, contributed to restore me to vigour. Fortune aided my audacity. Monsieur Mathas, procureur-fiscal of Monsieur le Prince de Condé, heard of my embarrassment. He sent to offer me a little house he had in his garden of Mont-Louis, at Montmorency. I accepted it with eagerness and gratitude. The bargain was soon concluded. I immediately sent to purchase a little furniture, to add to that we already had, to accommodate Thérèse and me. My effects I had carted away with a deal of trouble, and at a great expense. Notwithstanding the ice and snow, my removal was completed in a couple of days, and on the 15th of December I gave up the keys of the Hermitage, after having paid the wages of the gardener, though unable to pay my rent.

With respect to Madame Le Vasseur, I told her that we must part. Her daughter attempted to make me

change my resolution, but I was inflexible. I sent her off to Paris in the messenger's carriage, with all the furniture and effects she and her daughter had in common. I gave her some money, and engaged to pay her lodging with her children, or elsewhere, to provide for her subsistence as well as it should be possible for me to do it, and never to let her want bread as long as I should have it myself.

Finally, the second day after my arrival at Mont-Louis, I wrote to Madame d'Épinay the following letter: —

'MONTMORENCY, *17th December*, 1757.

'Nothing, madame, is so natural and necessary as to leave your house the moment you no longer approve of my remaining there. Upon your refusing your consent to my passing the rest of the winter at the Hermitage, I quitted it on the 15th of December. My destiny was to enter it in spite of myself and to leave it in the same fashion. I thank you for the residence you prevailed upon me to make there, and I would thank you still more had I paid for it less dearly. You are right in believing me unhappy; nobody upon earth knows better than yourself to what a degree I must be so. If being deceived in the choice of our friends be a misfortune, it is another not less cruel to recover from so pleasing an error.'

Such is the faithful narration of my residence at the Hermitage, and of the reasons which obliged me to leave it. I could not cut short the recital; it was necessary to continue it with the greatest exactness, this epoch of my life having had upon the rest of it an influence which will extend to my latest hour.

# BOOK X

## [1758]

THE extraordinary degree of strength that a transient effervescence had given me to quit the Hermitage left me the moment I was out of it. I was scarcely established in my new habitation before I frequently suffered from retentions, which were accompanied by a new complaint — that of a rupture, from which I had for some time, without knowing what it was, felt great inconvenience. I soon was reduced to the most cruel state. The physician Thierry, my old friend, came to see me, and made me acquainted with my situation. The sight of the surgical instruments and all the apparatus of the infirmities of years made me severely feel that when the body is no longer young the heart is not so with impunity. The fine season did not restore me, and I passed the whole year 1758 in a state of languor which made me think I was almost at the end of my career. I saw with impatience the closing scene approach. Recovered from the chimeras of friendship, and detached from everything which had made life desirable, I saw nothing more in it that could render it agreeable; all I perceived was wretchedness and misery, which prevented me from enjoying myself. I sighed for the moment when I should be free and escape from my enemies. But I must follow the order of events.

It seems that my retreat to Montmorency disconcerted Madame d'Épinay; probably she did not expect it. My melancholy situation, the severity of the season, the general falling-off of my friends, all made her and Grimm

believe that by driving me to the last extremity they should oblige me to implore mercy, and abase myself in the vilest manner, that I might be suffered to remain in an asylum which honour commanded me to leave. I left it so suddenly that they had not time to prevent the step from being taken, and they were reduced to the alternative of double or quits — to endeavour to ruin me entirely or to prevail upon me to return. Grimm chose the former, but I am of opinion that Madame d'Épinay would have preferred the latter; and I gather this from her answer to my last letter, in which she seemed to lay aside the airs she had given herself in the preceding ones, and to give an opening to an accommodation. The long delay of this answer, for which she made me wait a whole month, sufficiently indicates the difficulty she found in giving it a proper turn, and the deliberations by which it was preceded. She could not make any further advances without exposing herself; but after her former letters, and my sudden retreat from her house, it is impossible not to be struck with the care she takes in this letter not to suffer an offensive expression to escape her. I will copy it at length, to enable my reader to judge (B, No. 23).

'GENEVA, *January 17th*, 1758.

'I did not receive your letter of the 17th of December, monsieur, until yesterday. It was sent me in a box, filled with different things, which has been all this time upon the road. I shall answer only the postscript: as for the letter, I do not clearly understand it, and, could we come to a mutual explanation, I should like to refer all that has passed to a misunderstanding. I come back to the postscript. You may recollect, sir, that we agreed that the wages of the gardener of the Hermitage should pass through your hands, the better to make him feel that he depended upon you, and to avoid the ridiculous and indecent scenes which happened in the time of his predecessor. As a proof of this, the first quarter of his wages was given to you; and a few days before my departure

we agreed that I should reimburse what you had advanced. I know that of this you at first made some difficulty; but I had desired you to make these advances; it was natural I should acquit myself towards you, and this we concluded upon. Cahouet informs me that you refused to receive the money. There is certainly some mistake in the matter. I have given orders that it may again be offered to you, and I see no reason for your wishing to pay my gardener, notwithstanding our conventions, and even beyond the term of your inhabiting the Hermitage. I therefore expect, monsieur, that, recollecting everything I have the honour to state, you will not refuse to be reimbursed for the sums you have been pleased to advance for me.'

After what had passed, not having any confidence in Madame d'Épinay, I was unwilling to renew my connection with her; I returned no answer to this letter, and there our correspondence ended.[1] Perceiving that I had taken my resolution, she took hers, and, entering into all the views of Grimm and the Coterie Holbachique, she united her efforts with theirs to accomplish my ruin. Whilst they manœuvred at Paris, she did the same at Geneva. Grimm, who afterwards went to her there, completed what she had begun. Tronchin, whom they had no difficulty in gaining over, seconded them powerfully, and became the most violent of my persecutors, without having against me, any more than Grimm had, the least subject of complaint. They all three united to sow secretly in Geneva the seeds of that crop which came to ripeness there four years afterwards.

They had more trouble at Paris, where I was better known, and where hearts less disposed to hatred less easily received its impressions. The better to direct their blow, they began by giving out that it was I who

[1] The author's memory fails him on this point. In Madame d'Épinay's *Memoirs* (iii. 256) may be found a letter from Rousseau to that lady, which she held to be 'more impertinent than all the rest.'

had left them. (See Deleyre's letter, B, No. 30.) Thence, still feigning to be my friends, they dexterously spread their malignant accusations in the form of complaints of the injustice of their friend. Their auditors, thus thrown off their guard, listened more attentively to what was said of me, and were inclined to blame my conduct. The secret accusations of perfidy and ingratitude were made with greater precaution, and by that means with greater effect. I knew they imputed to me the most atrocious crimes, without being able to learn in what these consisted. All that I could infer from public rumour was that this was founded upon the four following capital offences: (1) my retiring to the country; (2) my passion for Madame d'Houdetot; (3) my refusing to accompany Madame d'Épinay to Geneva; and (4) my leaving the Hermitage. If to these they added other grievances, they took their measures so well that it has hitherto been impossible for me to learn the subject of them.

It is therefore at this period that I think I may fix the establishment of a system since adopted by those at whose disposal I am, and which has made such successful progress as will seem miraculous to persons who know not with what felicity everything which favours the malignity of man gains a firm footing. I will endeavour to explain in a few words what to me appears visible in this profound and obscure system.

With a name already distinguished and known throughout all Europe, I had still preserved my primitive simplicity. My mortal aversion to all that is known as party, faction, and cabal had kept me free and independent, without any other tie than the attachments of my heart. Alone, a foreigner, without family or fortune, and unconnected with everything except my principles and duties, I followed the paths of uprightness, never flattering or favouring any person at the expense of

justice and truth. Besides, having lived for two years past in solitude, without observing the course of events, unconnected with the affairs of the world, and not informed of what passed, nor desirous of being acquainted with it, I lived four leagues from Paris, as much separated from that capital by my indifference as I should have been in the island of Tinian by the sea.

Grimm, Diderot, and D'Holbach were, on the contrary, in the centre of the vortex, lived in the very midst of the great world, and divided amongst them almost all its spheres. Noblemen, wits, men of letters, men of the long robe, and women, all listened to them when they chose to act in concert. The advantage that three men in this situation united must have over a fourth in mine cannot but already appear. It is true, Diderot and D'Holbach were incapable — at least I think so — of forming black conspiracies; one of them was not base enough [1] nor the other sufficiently able; but it was for this reason that the party was more united. Grimm alone formed his plan in his own mind, and discovered no more of it than was necessary to induce his associates to concur in the execution. The ascendancy he had gained over them made this easy, and the effect of the whole answered to the superiority of his talents.

It was with these — which were of a superior kind — that, perceiving the advantage he might acquire from our respective situations, he conceived the project of completely overturning my reputation, and, without compromising himself, of giving me one of a nature quite opposite, by raising up about me an edifice of obscurity through which it was impossible for me to discern his manœuvres and unmask them.

[1] I confess that, since the writing of this book, all that I can discern through the mysteries that environ me leads me to fear that I did not know Diderot. — R.

This enterprise was difficult, because it was necessary to palliate the iniquity in the eyes of those of whose assistance he stood in need. He had honest men to deceive, to alienate from me the good opinion of everybody, and to leave me without a friend of any kind. What say I? He had to cut off all communication with me, that no word of truth might reach my ears. Had a single man of generosity come and said to me: 'You assume the appearance of virtue, yet this is the manner in which you are treated, and these the circumstances by which you are judged: what have you to say?' truth would have triumphed and Grimm have been undone. Of this he was fully convinced; but he had examined his own heart, and estimated men according to their merit. I am sorry, for the honour of humanity, that he judged with so much truth.

In these dark and crooked paths his steps, to be the more sure, were necessarily slow. He has for twelve years pursued his plan, and the most difficult part of it is still to come; this is to deceive the public entirely. There are among them eyes that have followed him more closely than he imagines. He is afraid of this public, and dares not lay his conspiracy open.[1] But he has found the easy means of accompanying it with power, and this power has the disposal of me. Thus supported, he advances with less danger. The satellites of power piquing themselves but little on uprightness, and still less on candour, he has no longer to fear the indiscretion of any honest man. His safety is in my being enveloped in an impenetrable obscurity, and in concealing from me his conspiracy, well knowing that, with whatever art he may have formed it, it could never sustain my gaze. His

[1] Since this was written he has taken the dangerous step with the fullest and most inconceivable success. I am of opinion that it was Tronchin who inspired him with courage and supplied him with means. — R.

great address consists in appearing to favour whilst he defames me, and in giving to his perfidy an air of generosity.

I felt the first effects of this system by the secret accusations of the Coterie Holbachique, without its being possible for me to know, or even to conjecture, in what these accusations consisted. Deleyre informed me in his letters that heinous things were attributed to me. Diderot, more mysteriously, told me the same thing; and when I came to an explanation with both, the whole was reduced to the heads of accusations of which I have already spoken. I perceived a gradual increase of coolness in the letters from Madame d'Houdetot. This I could not attribute to Saint-Lambert, who continued to write to me with the same friendship, and even came to see me after his return. It was impossible to think myself the cause of it, as we had separated well satisfied with each other, and nothing since that time had happened on my part, except my departure from the Hermitage, of which she felt the necessity. Therefore, not knowing whence this coolness — which she refused to acknowledge, although my heart was not to be deceived — could proceed, I was uneasy upon every account. I knew she greatly favoured her sister-in-law and Grimm, in consequence of their connections with Saint-Lambert, and I was afraid of their machinations. This agitation reopened my wounds, and rendered my correspondence so disagreeable as quite to disgust her with it. I saw, as at a distance, a thousand cruel circumstances, without discovering anything distinctly. I was in a situation the most insupportable to a man whose imagination is easily heated. Had I been quite retired from the world, and known nothing of the matter, I should have become more calm; but my heart still clung to attachments by means of which my enemies had a thousand advantages over

me; and the feeble rays which penetrated my asylum conveyed to me nothing more than a knowledge of the blackness of the mysteries which were concealed from my eyes.

I should have sunk, I have no doubt of it, under these torments, too cruel and insupportable to my open disposition, which, by the impossibility of concealing my sentiments, makes me fear everything from those concealed from me, if, fortunately, objects sufficiently interesting to my heart to divert it from others with which, in spite of myself, my mind was filled, had not presented themselves. In the last visit that Diderot paid me at the Hermitage he had spoken of the article 'Geneva,' which D'Alembert had inserted in the *Encyclopédie*. He had informed me that this article, concerted with the better class of citizens, had for its object the setting up of a theatre at Geneva, that measures had been taken accordingly, and that the establishment would soon take place. As Diderot seemed to think all this very proper, and did not doubt of the success of the measure, and as I had, besides, to debate with him upon too many other subjects to touch upon that article, I made him no answer; but, scandalised at these seductive preparatives to immorality in my country, I waited with impatience for the volume of the *Encyclopédie* in which the article was inserted, to see whether it would not be possible to give an answer which might ward off the blow. I received the volume soon after my establishment at Mont-Louis and found the article to be written with much art and address, and worthy of the pen whence it proceeded. This, however, did not abate my desire to answer it; and, notwithstanding the dejection of spirits under which I then laboured, my griefs and pains, the severity of the season, and the inconvenience of my new abode, in which I had not yet had time to settle commodiously, I set to work with a zeal which surmounted every obstacle.

In a severe winter in February, and in the situation I have described, I went every day, morning and evening, to pass a couple of hours in an open donjon which was at the bottom of the garden in which my habitation stood. This donjon, which terminated a terraced walk, looked upon the valley and the pond of Montmorency, and presented to me, as the closing point of a prospect, the plain but interesting Castle of Saint-Gratien, the retreat of the virtuous Catinat. It was in this place, then exposed to freezing cold, that, without being sheltered from the wind and snow, and having no other fire than that within my heart, I composed, in the space of three weeks, my letter to D'Alembert on theatres. This — for my *Julie* was not then half written — was the first of my writings that charmed me in composition. Until then virtuous indignation had been a substitute for Apollo, tenderness and a gentleness of mind now became so. The injustice I had been witness to had irritated me, that of which I became the object rendered me melancholy; and this melancholy without bitterness was but that of a heart too tender and affectionate, and which, deceived by those whom it had thought akin, was obliged to remain concentred. Full of that which had befallen me, and still affected by so many violent emotions, my heart added the sentiment of its sufferings to the ideas with which a meditation on my subject had inspired me; what I wrote bore evident marks of this mixture. Unconsciously, I described my actual situation, gave portraits of Grimm, Madame d'Épinay, Madame d'Houdetot, Saint-Lambert, myself. What delicious tears did I shed as I wrote! Alas! in these descriptions there are proofs but too evident that love, the fatal love of which I made such efforts to cure myself, still remained in my heart. With all this there was a certain tenderness relative to myself, for I thought I was dying, and imagined I was bidding the

public my last adieu. Far from fearing death, I joyfully saw it approach; but I felt some regret at leaving my fellow-creatures without their having perceived my real merit, and being convinced how much I should have deserved their esteem had they known me better. These are the secret causes of the singular tone that pervades this work, so widely opposed to that by which it was preceded.[1]

I corrected and copied the letter, and was preparing to print it, when, after a long silence, I received one from Madame d'Houdetot which brought upon me a new affliction more painful than any I had yet suffered. She informed me in this letter (B, No. 34) that my passion for her was known to all Paris; that I had spoken of it to persons who had made it public; that this rumour, having reached the ears of her lover, had nearly cost him his life; that at length he did her justice, and peace was restored between them; but on his account, as well as on hers and for the sake of her reputation, she thought it her duty to break off all correspondence with me, at the same time assuring me that she and her friend would never cease to take an interest in my welfare, that they would defend me before the public, and that she herself would from time to time send to inquire after my health.

And thou too, Diderot, exclaimed I. Unworthy friend! I could not, however, yet resolve to condemn him. My weakness was known to others who might have spoken of it. I wished to doubt — but this was soon out of my power. Saint-Lambert shortly after performed an action worthy of himself. Knowing my manner of thinking, he judged of the state in which I must be: betrayed by one set of my friends and forsaken by the other. He came to see me. The first time he had not many moments to spare. He came again. Unfortunately, not expecting

[1] *Discours sur l'Inégalité des Conditions.*

him, I was not at home. Thérèse, who happened to be there, had with him a conversation of upwards of two hours, in which they informed each other of facts of great importance to him and me. The surprise with which I learned that nobody doubted of my having lived with Madame d'Épinay, as Grimm then did, cannot be equalled, except by that of Saint-Lambert when he was convinced that the rumour was false. He, to the great dissatisfaction of the lady, was in the same situation with myself; and the facts brought to light by this conversation removed from me all regret on account of my having broken with her for ever. Relative to Madame d'Houdetot, he mentioned several circumstances with which neither Thérèse nor Madame d'Houdetot herself was acquainted, which were known to me only, and which I had never mentioned except to Diderot, under the seal of friendship; and it was Saint-Lambert himself to whom he had chosen to communicate them. This last step was sufficient to determine me. I resolved to break with Diderot for ever, and this without further deliberation, except on the manner of doing it; for I had perceived that secret ruptures turned to my prejudice, because they left the mask of friendship in possession of my most cruel enemies.

The rules of good breeding established in the world on this head seem to have been dictated by a spirit of treachery and falsehood. To appear the friend of a man, when in reality we are no longer so, is to reserve to ourselves the means of doing him an injury by betraying honest men into an error. I recollected that when the gifted Montesquieu broke with Père de Tournemine he immediately declared it openly, and said to everybody: 'Listen neither to Père de Tournemine nor myself, when we speak of each other, for we are no longer friends.' This open and generous proceeding was universally ap-

plauded. I resolved to follow the example with Diderot; but what method was I to take to publish the rupture authentically from my retreat, and yet without scandal? I concluded on inserting in the form of a note, in my work, a passage from the book of Ecclesiasticus, which declared the rupture, and even the subject of it, in terms sufficiently clear to such as were acquainted with the matter, but could signify nothing to the rest of the world. I determined also not to speak in my work of the friend whom I had renounced except with the honour always due to friendship even when extinct. The whole may be seen in the work itself.

There is nothing in this world but good fortune and ill fortune, and every act of courage seems to be a crime in adversity. For that which had been admired in Montesquieu I received only blame and reproach. As soon as my work was printed, and I had copies of it, I sent one to Saint-Lambert, who, the evening before, had written to me in his own name and that of Madame d'Houdetot a note expressive of the most tender friendship (B, No. 37). The following is the letter he wrote to me when he returned the copy that I had sent him (B, No. 38): —

'EAUBONNE, *10th October*, 1758.

'Indeed, monsieur, I cannot accept the present you have just made me. At that part of your preface where, relative to Diderot, you quote a passage from Ecclesiastes [he mistakes; it is from Ecclesiasticus] the book dropped from my hand. In the conversations we had together last summer, you seemed to be persuaded that Diderot was not guilty of the pretended indiscretions you had imputed to him. You may, for aught I know to the contrary, have cause to complain of him, but surely this does not give you a right to insult him publicly. You are not unacquainted with the nature of the persecutions he suffers, and you join the voice of an old friend to that of envy. I cannot refrain from telling you, monsieur, how much this heinous act of yours has shocked me. I am not acquainted

with Diderot, but I honour him, and I have a lively sense of the pain you give to a man whom, at least not in my hearing, you have never reproached with anything more than a trifling weakness. You and I, monsieur, differ too much in our principles ever to be agreeable to each other. Forget that I exist; this you may easily do. I have never done to men either good or evil of a nature to be long remembered. I promise, monsieur, to forget your person, and to remember nothing but your talents.'

This letter filled me with indignation and affliction; and in the excess of my pangs, feeling my pride wounded, I answered him by the following note: —

'MONTMORENCY, *11th October* 1758.

'Monsieur, — While reading your letter, I did you the honour to be surprised at it, and had the weakness to suffer it to affect me; but I find it unworthy of an answer.

'I will no longer continue the copies for Madame d'Houdetot. If it be not agreeable to her to keep what she has, she may send it me back and I will return her money. If she keeps it she must still send for the rest of her paper and the money; and at the same time I beg she will return me the prospectus which she has in her possession. Adieu, monsieur.'

Courage under misfortune irritates the hearts of cowards, but it is pleasing to generous minds. This note seemed to make Saint-Lambert reflect with himself and to regret his having been so violent; but too haughty in his turn to make open advances, he seized, and perhaps prepared, the opportunity of softening the effect of the blow that he had struck. A fortnight afterwards I received from Monsieur d'Épinay the following letter (B, No. 10): —

'*Thursday, 26th.*

'Monsieur, — I have received the book you had the goodness to send me, and am reading it with much pleasure. I have always experienced the same sentiment in reading all the works which have come from your pen. Receive my thanks for the whole. I should have returned you these in person had my

affairs permitted me to remain in your neighbourhood; but this year I did not stay long at La Chevrette. Monsieur and Madame Dupin ask me to dine there next Sunday. I expect Monsieur de Saint-Lambert, Monsieur de Francueil, and Madame d'Houdetot will be of the party; you will do me much pleasure by making one also. All the persons who are to dine with me desire it, and will as well as myself be delighted to pass with you a part of the day. I have the honour to be, with the most perfect consideration,' etc.

This letter made my heart beat violently; after having for a year past been the talk of Paris, the idea of presenting myself as a spectacle before Madame d'Houdetot made me tremble, and I had much difficulty in finding sufficient courage to support that trial. Yet, as she and Saint-Lambert were desirous of it, and D'Épinay spoke in the name of all the guests without naming one whom I should not be glad to see, I did not think, after all, that I should compromise myself by accepting a dinner to which I was in some degree invited by all who would be present. I therefore promised to go; on Sunday the weather was bad, Monsieur d'Épinay sent me his carriage, and I went.

My arrival caused a sensation; I never met a better reception; an observer would have thought the whole company felt how much I stood in need of encouragement. None but French hearts are susceptible of this kind of delicacy. However, I found more people than I had expected to see; amongst others the Comte d'Houdetot, whom I did not know, and his sister Madame de Blainville, whose absence would have pleased me as well. She had the year before come several times to Eaubonne, and her sister-in-law had left her in our solitary walks, to wait until she thought proper to suffer her to join us. She had harboured a resentment against me, which during this dinner she gratified at her ease; for one may guess that the presence of the Comte d'Houdetot and

Saint-Lambert did not give me the laugh on my side, and that a man embarrassed in the most common conversations was not brilliant in this one. I never suffered so much, appeared so awkward, or received more unexpected mortifications. As soon as we had risen from table, I withdrew from that horrid woman; I had the pleasure of seeing Saint-Lambert and Madame d'Houdetot approach me, and we conversed together a part of the afternoon, upon things very indifferent, it is true, but with the same familiarity as before my involuntary error. This attention was not lost upon my heart; and, could Saint-Lambert have read what passed there, he certainly would have been satisfied with it. I can safely assert that, although on my arrival the presence of Madame d'Houdetot gave me violent palpitations, on returning from the house I scarcely thought of her; my mind was entirely taken up with Saint-Lambert.

Notwithstanding the pointed sarcasms of Madame de Blainville, this dinner was of great service to me, and I congratulated myself upon not having refused the invitation. I not only discovered that the intrigues of Grimm and the Holbachians had not deprived me of my old acquaintance,[1] but — what flattered me still more — that the sentiments of Madame d'Houdetot and Saint-Lambert were less changed than I had imagined; and I at length understood that his keeping her at a distance from me proceeded more from jealousy than disesteem. This was a consolation to me, and calmed my mind. Certain of not being an object of contempt in the eyes of persons whom I esteemed, I wrought in reliance upon my own heart with greater courage and success. If I did not quite extinguish in it a guilty and unhappy passion, I at least so well regulated the remains of it that they have

[1] Such, in the simplicity of my heart, was still my opinion when I wrote my *Confessions*. — R.

never since that moment led me into the most trifling error. The copying for Madame d'Houdetot, which she prevailed upon me to take up again, and my works, which I continued to send her as soon as they appeared, produced me from her now and then a few notes and messages, indifferent but obliging. She did still more, as will hereafter appear; and the reciprocal conduct of all three, after our intercourse had ceased, may serve as an example of the manner in which persons of honour separate when association is no longer agreeable.

Another advantage that this dinner procured me was its being spoken of in Paris, where it served as a complete refutation of the rumour spread by my enemies that I had quarrelled with every person who partook of it, and especially with Monsieur d'Épinay. When I left the Hermitage I had written him a very polite letter of thanks, to which he answered not less politely, and mutual civilities had continued, as well between us as with Monsieur de Lalive, his brother-in-law, who even came to see me at Montmorency, and sent me some of his engravings. Excepting the two sisters-in-law of Madame d'Houdetot, I have never been on bad terms with any person of the family.

My letter to D'Alembert had great success. All my works had been very well received, but this was more favourable to me. It taught the public to distrust the insinuations of the Coterie Holbachique. When I went to the Hermitage, this Coterie predicted, with its usual self-sufficiency, that I should not remain there three months. When it was found that I had stayed there twenty months, and, though obliged to leave it, still fixed my residence in the country, the Coterie insisted that this was pure obstinacy, and that I was weary to death of my retirement, but that, eaten up with pride, I chose rather to become a victim to my stubbornness than to

acknowledge it and return to Paris. The letter to D'Alembert breathed a gentleness of mind which every one perceived not to be affected. Had I been dissatisfied with my retreat, my style and manner would have shown it. This latter tone reigned in all the works I had written at Paris; but in the first I wrote in the country no appearance of it was to be found. To persons who knew how to distinguish, this mark was decisive: they perceived that I was again in my element.

Yet this same work, notwithstanding all the mildness it breathed, made me, by a mistake of my own and my usual ill-luck, another enemy amongst men of letters. I had become acquainted with Marmontel at the house of Monsieur de la Poplinière, and this acquaintance had been continued at that of the Baron. Marmontel at that time composed *Le Mercure de France*. As I had too much pride to send my works to the authors of periodical publications, and wishing to send him this without his imagining it was in consequence of that title or that I was desirous he should speak of it in *Le Mercure*, I wrote upon the book that it was not for the author of *Le Mercure*, but for Monsieur Marmontel. I thought I was paying him a fine compliment; he mistook it for a cruel offence, and became my irreconcilable enemy. He wrote against this letter with politeness, but with a bitterness easily perceptible, and since that time has never lost an opportunity of injuring me in society, and of indirectly ill-treating me in his works. Such difficulty is there in managing the irritable self-love of men of letters, and so careful ought every person to be not to leave anything even slightly equivocal in the compliments they pay them.

[1759.] Having nothing more to disturb me, I took advantage of my leisure and independence to continue

my literary pursuits with more coherence. I this winter finished *Julie*, and sent it to Rey, who had it printed in the year following. I was, however, interrupted in my projects by a very disagreeable circumstance. I heard new preparations were making at the Opera House to revive *Le Devin du Village*. Enraged at seeing these people arrogantly dispose of my property, I again took up the memoir I had sent to Monsieur d'Argenson, to which no answer had been returned, and, having made some trifling alterations in it, I sent the manuscript by Monsieur Sellon, Resident from Geneva, and a letter, with which he was pleased to charge himself, to Monsieur le Comte de Saint-Florentin, who had succeeded Monsieur d'Argenson in the Opéra department. Duclos, to whom I communicated what I had done, mentioned it to the *petits violons*, who offered to restore me, not my opera, but my freedom of the theatre, which I was no longer in a situation to enjoy. Perceiving that I had not the least justice to expect from any quarter, I gave up the affair; and the directors of the Opéra, without answering or even listening to my reasons, have continued to dispose as of their own property, and to turn to their profit, *Le Devin du Village*, which incontestably belongs to nobody but myself.[1]

Since I had shaken off the yoke of my tyrants, I led a life sufficiently agreeable and peaceful; deprived of the charm of too strong attachments, I was delivered from the weight of their chains. Disgusted with the friends who feigned to be my protectors, and wished absolutely to dispose of me at will, and, in spite of myself, to subject me to their pretended good services, I resolved in future to have no other connections than those of simple benevolence. These, without the least constraint upon

[1] It now belongs to them by virtue of a recent agreement made with me. — R.

liberty, constitute the pleasure of life, and have equality for their basis. I had of them as many as were necessary to enable me to taste of the charms of society without being subject to dependence; and as soon as I had made an experiment of this manner of life, I felt it was the most proper to my age, that I might end my days in peace, far removed from the agitations, quarrels, and cavillings in which I had just been half submerged.

During my residence at the Hermitage, and after my settlement at Montmorency, I had made in the neighbourhood some agreeable acquaintances, which did not subject me to any inconvenience. The principal of these was young Loyseau de Mauléon, who, then beginning to plead at the bar, did not yet know what rank he would one day hold there. I, for my part, was not in the least doubt about the matter. I soon pointed out to him the illustrious career in the midst of which he is now seen, and predicted that if he laid down to himself rigid rules for the choice of causes, and never became the defender of anything but virtue and justice, his genius, elevated by this sublime sentiment, would be equal to that of the greatest orators. He followed my advice, and now feels the effects of it. His defence of Monsieur de Portes is worthy of Demosthenes. He came every year within a quarter of a league of the Hermitage to pass the vacation at Saint-Brice, in the fief of Mauléon, belonging to his mother, and where the great Bossuet had formerly lodged. This is a fief of which a like succession of proprietors would render nobility difficult to support.

I had also for a neighbour, in the same village of Saint-Brice, the bookseller Guérin, a man of wit, learned, of an amiable disposition, and one of the first in his profession. He brought me acquainted with Jean Néaulme, bookseller of Amsterdam, his friend and correspondent, who afterwards printed *Émile*.

I had another acquaintance still nearer than Saint-Brice: this was Monsieur Maltor, vicar of Grosley, a man better adapted for the functions of a statesman and a minister than for those of a village curé, and to whom a diocese at least would have been given to govern if talents decided the disposal of places. He had been secretary to the Comte du Luc, and was formerly intimately acquainted with Jean-Baptiste Rousseau. Holding in as much esteem the memory of that illustrious exile as he held in horror the villain Saurin who ruined him, he possessed curious anecdotes of both, which Séguy had not inserted in the life, still in manuscript, of the former; and he assured me that the Comte du Luc, far from ever having had reason to complain of his conduct, had until his last moment preserved for him the warmest friendship. Monsieur Maltor, to whom Monsieur de Vintimille gave this comfortable retreat after the death of his patron, had formerly been employed in many affairs of which, although far advanced in years, he still preserved a distinct remembrance, and reasoned upon them very well. His conversation, equally amusing and instructive, had nothing in it resembling that of a village pastor; he joined the manners of a man of the world to the knowledge of one who passes his life in study. He, of all my permanent neighbours, was the person whose society was the most agreeable to me, and whom I quitted with most regret.

I was also acquainted at Montmorency with several fathers of the Oratory, and amongst others Père Berthier, professor of natural philosophy, to whom, notwithstanding some little tincture of pedantry, I became attached on account of a certain air of cordial good-nature which I observed in him. I had, however, some difficulty in reconciling this great simplicity with the desire and the art he had of everywhere thrusting himself into the com-

pany of the great, as well as that of the women, devotees, and philosophers. He knew how to be all things to all men. I was greatly pleased with the man, and spoke of my satisfaction to everybody. Apparently what I had said of him came to his ear. He one day thanked me for having thought him a good-natured man. I observed something in his forced smile which, in my eyes, totally changed his physiognomy, and which has since frequently recurred to my mind. I cannot better compare this smile than to that of Panurge purchasing Dindenaut's sheep. Our acquaintance had begun a little time after my arrival at the Hermitage, to which place he frequently came to see me. I was already settled at Montmorency when he left to go and reside at Paris. He often saw Madame Le Vasseur there. One day, when I least expected anything of the kind, he wrote to me in behalf of that woman, informing me that Grimm offered to maintain her, and to ask my permission to accept the offer. This I understood consisted in a pension of three hundred livres, and that Madame Le Vasseur was to come and live at Deuil, between La Chevrette and Montmorency. I will not say what impression the application made on me. It would have been less surprising had Grimm had ten thousand livres a year, or any relation more easy to comprehend with that woman, and had not such a crime been made of my taking her to the country, where, as if she had become younger, he was now pleased to think of placing her. I perceived the good old lady had no other reason for asking my permission — which had I refused, she might easily have done without — but the fear of losing what I already gave her. Although this charity appeared to be very extraordinary, it did not strike me so much then as afterwards. But had I known even everything I have since discovered, I would still as readily have given my consent as I did, and was obliged to do,

unless I had exceeded the offer of Monsieur Grimm. Père Berthier afterwards cured me a little of my opinion of his good-nature, which he had thought so amusing, and with which I had so unthinkingly charged him.

This same Père Berthier was acquainted with two men who, for what reason I knew not, sought to become so with me; there was but little similarity between their tastes and mine. They were children of Melchisedec, of whom neither the country nor the family was known, no more than, in all probability, their real name. They were Jansenists, and passed for priests in disguise, perhaps on account of their ridiculous mode of wearing long swords, to which they appeared to have been fastened. The great mystery observable in all their proceedings gave them the appearance of the heads of a party, and I never had the least doubt of their being the authors of the *Gazette Ecclésiastique*. The one, tall, smooth-tongued, and self-seeking, was a Monsieur Terrand; the other, short, squat, a sneerer, and punctilious, was a Monsieur Minard. They called each other cousin. They lodged at Paris with D'Alembert, in the house of his nurse, named Madame Rousseau, and had taken at Montmorency a little apartment to pass the summers there. They did everything for themselves, and had neither servant nor messenger; each had his turn weekly to purchase provisions, do the business of the kitchen, and sweep the house. In other respects, on the whole, they managed tolerably well, and we sometimes ate with each other. I know not for what reason they gave themselves any concern about me: for my part, my only motive for associating with them was their playing at chess, and to make up a poor little party I suffered four tedious hours. As they thrust themselves into all companies, and wished to intermeddle in everything, Thérèse called them the *commères*, and by this name they were long known at Montmorency.

Such, with my host Monsieur Mathas, who was a good sort of man, were my principal country acquaintance. I still had a sufficient number at Paris, to live there agreeably whenever I chose it, outside the sphere of men of letters, amongst whom Duclos was the only one whom I could call friend, for Deleyre was still too young; and although, after having been a witness to the manœuvres of the philosophical tribe against me, he had withdrawn from it — at least I thought so — I could not yet forget the facility with which he had made himself the mouthpiece of all the people of that description.

In the first place, I had my old and respectable friend Monsieur Roguin. This was a good old-fashioned friend for whom I was not indebted to my writings, but to myself, and whom for that reason I have always preserved. I had the good Lenieps, my countryman, and his daughter, then alive, Madame Lambert. I had a young Genevese, named Coindet, a good fellow, apparently careful, officious, zealous, but really ignorant, presumptuous, greedy and grasping, who came to see me soon after I had gone to reside at the Hermitage, and, without any other introducer than himself, soon made his way into my good graces against my will. He had a taste for drawing, and was acquainted with artists. He was of service to me relative to the engravings for *Julie;* he undertook the direction of the designs and the plates, and acquitted himself well of the commission.

I had free access to the house of Monsieur Dupin, which, less brilliant than in the younger days of Madame Dupin, was still, through the merit of the heads of the family and the choice of company which assembled there, one of the best houses in Paris. As I had not preferred anybody to them, and had only separated myself from them that I might live independently, they had always welcomed me in a friendly manner, and I was

always certain of being well received by Madame Dupin. I might even have counted her amongst my country neighbours after her establishment at Clichy, to which place I sometimes went to pass a day or two, and whither I should have gone more frequently had Madame Dupin and Madame de Chenonceaux been upon better terms. But the difficulty of dividing my time in the same house between two women who had no sympathy with each other made life at Clichy too irksome. Attached to Madame de Chenonceaux by a friendship most frank and familiar, I had the pleasure of seeing her more at my ease at Deuil, where, close to my door, she had taken a small house, and even in my own habitation, where she often came to see me.

I had likewise for a friend Madame de Créqui, who, having become very devout, no longer received the D'Alemberts, the Marmontels — indeed, few men of letters, except, I believe, the Abbé Trublet, half a hypocrite at that time, of whom she was sufficiently weary. I, whose acquaintance she had sought, lost neither her good wishes nor intercourse. She sent me presents of young pullets from Mons; and her intention was to come and see me the year following had not a journey upon which Madame de Luxembourg determined prevented her. I here owe her a place apart; she will always hold a distinguished one in my remembrance.

In this list I should place a man whom, except Roguin, I ought to have mentioned as the first upon it — my old friend and brother politician De Carrio, formerly titulary secretary to the embassy from Spain to Venice, afterwards in Sweden, where he was chargé des affaires, and at length really secretary to the embassy at Paris. He came and surprised me at Montmorency when I least expected him. He was decorated with a Spanish order, the name of which I have forgotten, with a fine cross in

jewels. He had been obliged, in his proofs of nobility, to add a letter to his name, and bore that of the Chevalier de Carrion. I found him still the same man, possessing the same excellent heart, and a disposition becoming daily more amiable. We should have renewed our former intimacy had not Coindet interposed according to custom, taken advantage of the distance I was at from town to insinuate himself into my place, and, in my name, into his confidence, and supplant me by the excess of his zeal to serve me.

The remembrance of Carrion makes me recollect one of my country neighbours, of whom I should be inexcusable not to speak, as I have to make confession of an unpardonable wrong towards him: this was the honest Monsieur Le Blond, who had done me a service at Venice, and, having made an excursion to France with his family, had taken a house in the country, at La Briche, not far from Montmorency.[1] As soon as I heard he was my neighbour, I, in the joy of my heart, felt that I was his, and made it more a pleasure than a duty to pay him a visit. I set off upon this errand the next day. I was met by people who were coming to see me, and with whom I was obliged to return. Two days afterwards I set off again for the same purpose; he had dined at Paris with all his family. A third time he was at home. I heard the voice of women, and saw at the door a coach, which alarmed me. I wished to see him, at least for the first time, quite at my ease, that we might talk over what had passed during our former connection. In fine, I so often postponed my visit from day to day that the shame of discharging a like duty so late prevented me from doing it at all. After having dared to

[1] When I wrote this, possessed with my customary blind confidence, I was far from suspecting the true motive and effect of this journey to Paris. — R.

wait so long I no longer dared to present myself. This negligence, at which Monsieur Le Blond could not but be justly offended, gave, relative to him, the appearance of ingratitude to my indolence; and yet I felt my heart so little culpable that, had it been in my power to do Monsieur Le Blond the least service, even unknown to himself, I am certain he would not have found me idle. But indolence, negligence, and delay in little duties to be fulfilled have been more prejudicial to me than great vices. My greatest faults have been omissions; I have rarely done what I ought not to have done, and, unfortunately, I have still more rarely done what I ought to have done.

Since I am now upon the subject of my Venetian acquaintance, I must not forget one of these whom I still preserved for a considerable time after my intercourse with the rest had ceased. This was Monsieur de Jonville, who continued after his return from Genoa to show me much friendship. He was fond of seeing me, and of conversing with me upon the affairs of Italy, and the follies of Monsieur de Montaigu, of whom he himself knew many anecdotes by means of his acquaintance in the Office for Foreign Affairs, with which he was much connected. I had also the pleasure of seeing at his house my old comrade Dupont, who had purchased a place in the province where he lived, and whose affairs sometimes brought him to Paris. Monsieur de Jonville became by degrees so desirous of seeing me that he in some measure laid me under constraint, and, although our places of residence were at a great distance from each other, we had a friendly quarrel when I let a week pass without going to dine with him. When he went to Jonville he was always desirous of my accompanying him, but having once been there to pass a week, which did not seem to pass very swiftly, I had no desire to return. Monsieur de Jonville was certainly an honourable man, and even

amiable in certain respects, but his understanding was confined; he was handsome, rather fond of his person, and somewhat tiresome. He had one of the most singular collections perhaps in the world, to which he gave much of his attention, and endeavoured to acquire for it that of his friends, to whom it sometimes afforded less amusement than it did to himself. This was a complete collection of the vaudevilles of the Court and of Paris, for upwards of fifty years past, in which many anecdotes were to be found that would have been sought for in vain elsewhere. These are memoirs for the history of France which would scarcely be thought of in any other country.

One day, whilst we were still upon the very best terms, he received me so very coldly, and in a manner so different from that which was customary to him, that, after having given him an opportunity to explain, and even having begged him to do it, I left his house with a resolution in which I have persevered, never to return to it again; for I am seldom seen where I have been once ill received; and in this case there was no Diderot who might plead for Monsieur de Jonville. I vainly endeavoured to discover what I had done to offend him; I was quite at fault. I was certain of never having spoken of him or his in any other than in the most honourable manner, for he had acquired my friendship; and besides my having nothing but favourable things to say of him, my most inviolable maxim has been that of never speaking but in an honourable manner of the houses I frequented.

At length, by continually ruminating, I formed the following conjecture: The last time we had seen each other I had supped with him at the apartment of some girls of his acquaintance, in company with two or three clerks in the Office of Foreign Affairs, very amiable men,

and who had neither the manner nor the appearance of libertines; and on my part I can assert that the whole evening passed in making melancholy reflections on the wretched fate of the creatures with whom we were. I did not pay anything, as Monsieur de Jonville gave the supper, nor did I make the girls the least present, because I gave them not the opportunity I had given to the *padoana* of establishing a claim to the trifle I might have offered. We all came away together, cheerfully and upon good terms. Without having made a second visit to the girls, I went two or three days afterwards to dine with Monsieur de Jonville, whom I had not seen during that interval, and who gave me the reception of which I have spoken. Unable to suppose any other cause for it than some misunderstanding relative to the supper, and perceiving that he had no inclination to explain, I resolved to visit him no longer, but I still continued to send him my works. He frequently sent me his compliments; and one evening, meeting him in the *chauffoir* of the Comédie Française, he obligingly reproached me with not having called to see him, which, however, did not induce me to depart from my resolution. Therefore this affair had rather the appearance of a coolness than a rupture. However, not having heard aught of him since that time, it would have been too late after an absence of so many years to renew my acquaintance with him. It is for this reason that Monsieur de Jonville is not named in my list, although I had for a considerable time frequented his house.

I will not swell my catalogue with the names of many other persons with whom I was or had become less intimate, although I sometimes saw them in the country, either at my own house or that of some neighbour, such, for instance, as the Abbés de Condillac and de Mably, Messieurs de Mairan, de Lalive, de Boisgelou, Watelet,

Ancelet, and others. I will pass lightly over that of Monsieur de Margency, gentleman-in-ordinary to the King, an ancient member of the Coterie Holbachique, which he had quitted as well as myself, and an old friend of Madame d'Épinay, from whom he had separated, as I had done. I likewise consider that of his friend Desmahis, the celebrated but short-lived author of the comedy of *L'Impertinent*, of much the same importance. The first was my neighbour in the country, his estate at Margency being near to Montmorency. We were old acquaintances, but the neighbourhood, and a certain conformity of experience, connected us still more. The second died soon afterwards. He had merit, and even wit, but he was in some degree the original of his comedy, and a little of a coxcomb with women, by whom he was not much regretted.

I cannot, however, omit taking notice of a new correspondence that I entered into at this period, which has had too much influence over the rest of my life not to make it necessary for me to mark its origin. I refer to Monsieur de Lamoignon de Malesherbes, Premier Président of the Cour des Aides, then censor of books, which office he exercised with equal intelligence and mildness, to the great satisfaction of men of letters. I had not once been to see him at Paris; yet I had never received from him any other than the most obliging condescensions relative to the censorship, and I knew that he had more than once very severely reprimanded persons who had written against me. I had fresh evidence of his kindness upon the subject of the publication of *Julie*. The despatch of the proofs of so large a work from Amsterdam by post being very costly, he, to whom all letters were free, permitted these to be addressed to him, and sent them to me under the countersign of Monsieur le Chancelier, his father. When the work was printed he

did not permit its sale in the kingdom until, contrary to my wishes, an edition had been sold for my benefit. As the receipt of this profit would, on my part, have been a theft committed upon Rey, to whom I had sold the manuscript, I not only refused to accept the present intended me, without his consent, which he very generously gave, but insisted upon dividing with him the hundred pistoles to which it amounted, but of which he would not receive anything. For these hundred pistoles I had the mortification, against which Monsieur de Malesherbes had not forewarned me, of seeing my work horribly mutilated, and the sale of the good edition stopped until the bad one was entirely disposed of.

I have always considered Monsieur de Malesherbes as a man whose uprightness was proof against every temptation. Nothing that has happened has ever made me doubt for a moment of his probity; but, as weak as he is polite, he sometimes injures those whom he wishes to serve by the excess of his zeal to preserve them from harm. He not only retrenched a hundred pages in the edition of Paris, but he made another retrenchment, which might be called a piece of bad faith, in the copy of the genuine edition that he sent to Madame de Pompadour. It is somewhere said in that work that the wife of a collier is more respectable than the mistress of a prince. This phrase, I solemnly affirm, had occurred to me in the warmth of composition, without any application. In reading over the work I perceived that it would be applied, yet, in consequence of the imprudent maxim I had adopted of not suppressing anything on account of the applications which might be made, when my conscience bore witness to me that I had not made them at the time I wrote, I determined not to expunge the phrase, and contented myself with substituting the word *prince* for *king*, which I had first written. This softening did not seem

sufficient to Monsieur de Malesherbes; he retrenched the whole expression in a new sheet which he caused to be printed on purpose, and inserted with as much exactness as possible in Madame de Pompadour's copy. She was not ignorant of this trick. Some good-natured people took the trouble to inform her of it. For my part, it was not until a long time afterwards, and when I began to feel the consequences of it, that the matter came to my knowledge.

Is not this the origin of the concealed but implacable hatred of another lady who was in a like situation,[1] without my knowing it or even being acquainted with her when I wrote the passage? When the book was published the acquaintance was made, and I was very uneasy. I mentioned this to the Chevalier de Lorenzi, who laughed at me, and said the lady was so little offended that she had not even taken notice of the matter. I believed him, perhaps rather too lightly, and made myself easy when there was much reason for my being otherwise.

At the beginning of the winter I received an additional mark of the kindness of Monsieur de Malesherbes, of which I was very sensible, although I did not think proper to take advantage of it. A place was vacant in the *Journal des Savants*. Margency wrote to me, proposing to me the place, as from himself. But I easily perceived from the manner of his letter (C, No. 33) that he was dictated to and authorised; he afterwards told me (C, No. 47) that he had been desired to make me the offer. The duties of this place were but trifling. All I should have had to do would have been to make two extracts a month from the books brought to me for that purpose, without being under the necessity of going once to Paris, not even to pay the magistrate a visit of thanks.

[1] The Comtesse de Boufflers, mistress of the Prince de Conti.

In this way I should have entered a society of men of letters of the first merit — Messieurs de Mairan, Clairaut, de Guignes, and the Abbé Barthélemy; with the two first of whom I had already made an acquaintance, and that of the two others was very desirable. In fine, for this trifling employment, the duties of which I might so commodiously have discharged, there was a salary of eight hundred francs. I was for a few hours undecided, and wholly from a fear of making Margency angry, and displeasing Monsieur de Malesherbes. But at length the insupportable constraint of not having it in my power to work when I thought proper, and of being commanded by time, and moreover the certainty of badly performing the functions with which I was to charge myself, prevailed over everything, and determined me to refuse a place for which I was unfit. I knew that my whole talent consisted in a certain warmth of mind with respect to the subjects of which I had to treat, and that nothing but the love of that which was great, true, and beautiful could animate my genius. What would the subjects of the extracts I should have had to make from books, or even the books themselves, have signified to me? My indifference about them would have frozen my pen and blunted my faculties. People thought I could make a trade of writing, as the other men of letters did; instead of which I never could write but from the warmth of imagination. This certainly was not necessary for the *Journal des Savants*. I therefore wrote to Margency a letter of thanks in the politest terms possible, and so well explained to him my reasons, that it was not possible that either he or Monsieur de Malesherbes could imagine that there was pride or ill-humour in my refusal. Indeed, they both approved of it without receiving me less politely; and the secret concerning this affair was so well kept that the public never heard a whisper of it.

The proposition did not come to me in a favourable moment. I had some time before this formed the project of quitting literature, and especially the trade of an author. I had been disgusted with men of letters by everything that had lately befallen me, and had learned from experience that it was impossible to proceed in the same track without having some connections with them. I was not much less dissatisfied with men of the world, and in general with the mixed life I had lately led, half to myself and half devoted to societies for which I was unfit. I felt more than ever, and by constant experience, that every unequal association is disadvantageous to the weaker side. Living with opulent people, and in a situation different from that which I had chosen, without keeping house as they did, I was obliged to imitate them in many things; and little expenses, which were nothing to their fortunes, were for me not less ruinous than indispensable. Another man in the country house of a friend is served by his own servant, as well at table as in his chamber: he sends him to seek for everything he wants; having nothing directly to do with the servants of the house, not even seeing them, he gives them what he pleases, and when he thinks proper; but I, alone and without a servant, was at the mercy of the servants of the house, of whom it was necessary to gain the good graces, that I might not have much to suffer; and, being treated as the equal of their master, I was obliged to treat them accordingly, and better than another would have done, because, in fact, I stood in greater need of their services. This, where there are but few domestics, may be complied with; but in the houses that I frequented there were a great number, all very arrogant, very knavish, very sharp — I mean for their own interests — and the rascals knew how to put me in need of the services of them all successively. The women of

Paris, who have so much wit, have no just idea of this inconvenience, and in their zeal to economize my purse they ruined me. If I supped in town at any considerable distance from my lodgings, instead of permitting me to send for a hackney-coach, the mistress of the house ordered her horses to be put to and sent me home in her carriage: she was very glad to save me the twenty-four sous for the fiacre, but never thought of the écu I gave to her coachman and footman. If a lady wrote to me from Paris to the Hermitage, or to Montmorency, she regretted the four sous the postage of the letter would have cost me, and sent it by one of her servants, who came sweating on foot, and to whom I gave a dinner and an écu, which he certainly had well earned. If she proposed to me to pass with her a week or a fortnight at her country house, she still said to herself, 'It will be a saving to the poor man; during that time his eating will cost him nothing.' She never recollected that I was the whole time idle; that the expenses of my family, my rent, linen, and clothes were still going on; that I paid my barber double, and that it cost me more being in her house than in my own. Although I confined my little largesses to the houses in which I customarily lived, these were still ruinous to me. I am certain that I have paid upwards of twenty-five écus in the house of Madame d'Houdetot, at Eaubonne, where I never slept more than four or five times, and upwards of a hundred pistoles as well at Épinay as at La Chevrette, during the five or six years that I was most assiduous there. These expenses are inevitable to a man like me, who knows not how to provide anything for himself, or devise expedients of any kind, and cannot support the sight of a lackey who grumbles and serves with a sour look. With Madame Dupin even, where I was one of the family, and in whose house I rendered many services to the servants, I never

received theirs save in return for money. In course of time it was necessary to renounce these little liberalities, which my situation no longer permitted me to bestow, and I then felt still more severely the inconvenience of associating with people in a situation different from my own.

Had this manner of life been to my taste, I should have been consoled for a heavy expense which I dedicated to my pleasures; but to ruin myself at the same time that I fatigued my mind was insupportable; and I had so felt the weight of this, that, profiting by the interval of liberty I then had, I was determined to perpetuate it, and entirely to renounce great companies, the composition of books, and all literary commerce, and for the remainder of my days to confine myself to the narrow and peaceful sphere in which I felt that I was born to move.

The produce of 'La Lettre à D'Alembert,' and of *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, had a little improved the state of my finances, which had been considerably exhausted at the Hermitage. I had now about a thousand écus in my purse. *Émile*, to which, after I had finished the *Héloïse*, I had given great application, was in forwardness, and the produce of this could not be less than the sum of which I was already in possession. I intended to place this money in such a manner as to produce me a little regular income, which, with my copying, might be sufficient to my wants without writing any more. I had two other works upon the stocks. The first of these was my *Institutions Politiques*. I examined the state of this work, and found that it still required several years' labour. I had not courage enough to continue it, and to wait until it was finished, before I carried my intention into execution. Therefore, laying the book aside, I determined to take from it all I could, and to burn the rest; and,

continuing this with zeal, without interrupting *Émile*, I finished in less than two years the *Contrat Social*.

The *Dictionnaire de Musique* now remained. This was mechanical work, and might be taken up at any time; the object of it was entirely pecuniary. I reserved to myself the liberty of laying it aside or of finishing it at my ease, according as my other resources should render this necessary or superfluous. With respect to the *Morale Sensitive*, of which I had executed nothing more than a sketch, I entirely gave it up.

As my last project, if I found I could do altogether without copying, was that of removing from Paris, where the affluence of visitors rendered my housekeeping expensive, and deprived me of the time requisite to provide for it, to prevent in my retirement the state of lassitude into which an author is said to fall when he has laid down his pen, I reserved to myself an occupation which might fill up the void in my solitude without tempting me to furnish more matter for the press in my lifetime. I know not for what reason Rey had long urged me to write the memoirs of my life. Although these were not up to that time interesting as to the facts, I felt they might become so by the candour with which I was capable of giving them, and I determined to make of these the only work of the kind, by an unexampled veracity, that, for once at least, the world might see a man such as he inwardly was. I had always laughed at the false ingenuousness of Montaigne, who, feigning to confess his faults, takes great care not to give himself any, except such as are pleasing; whilst I, who have ever thought, and still think myself, considering everything, the best of men, felt that there is no human being, however pure he may be, who does not internally conceal some odious vice. I knew that I was depicted to the public as so unlike my real self, and sometimes in

such a distorted guise, that, notwithstanding my faults, all of which I was determined to relate, I could not but be a gainer by showing myself in my proper colours. This, besides, not being done without setting forth others also in theirs, and the work for the same reason not being of a nature to appear during my lifetime, and that of several other persons, I was the more emboldened to make my *Confessions*, at which I should never have to blush before any person. I therefore resolved to dedicate my leisure to the execution of this undertaking, and immediately began to collect such letters and papers as might guide or assist my memory, greatly regretting the loss of all that I had burned, mislaid, and destroyed.

The project of absolute retirement, one of the most reasonable I had ever formed, was strongly impressed upon my mind; and for the execution of it I was already taking measures, when Heaven, which prepared me a different destiny, plunged me into another vortex.

Montmorency, the ancient and fine patrimony of the illustrious family of that name, was taken from it by confiscation. It passed, by the sister of Duke Henry, to the House of Condé, which has changed the name of Montmorency to that of Enghien, and the duchy has no other château than an old tower, where the archives are kept, and to which the vassals come to do homage. But at Montmorency, or Enghien, there is a private house, built by Croisat — called Le Pauvre — which, having the magnificence of the most superb château, deserves and bears that name. The majestic appearance of this noble edifice; the terrace upon which it is reared; the view from it, not equalled perhaps in any country; the spacious saloon, painted by the hand of a master; the garden, planted by the celebrated Le Nôtre — all combine to form a whole strikingly majestic, in which there is still a simplicity that enforces admiration. Monsieur

le Maréchal Duc de Luxembourg, who then inhabited this house, came twice every year into the neighbourhood where formerly his ancestors were the masters, to pass altogether five or six weeks as a private inhabitant, but with a splendour which did not degenerate from the ancient lustre of his family. On the first journey that he made to it after my residing at Montmorency, Monsieur and Madame la Maréchale sent to me a valet de chambre with their compliments, inviting me to sup with them as often as it should be agreeable to me; and at each time of their coming they never failed to reiterate the same compliments and invitation. This called to my recollection Madame de Beuzenval sending me to dine in the servants' hall. Times were changed; but I was still the same man. I did not choose to be sent to dine in the servants' hall, and was but little desirous of appearing at the table of the great. I should have been much better pleased had they left me as I was, without caressing and without humiliating me. I answered politely and respectfully to Monsieur and Madame de Luxembourg, but I did not accept their offers; and so much did my indisposition and timidity, with my embarrassment in speaking, make me tremble at the mere idea of appearing in an assembly of people of the Court, that I did not even go to the château to pay a visit of thanks, although I sufficiently comprehended that this was all they desired, and that their eager politeness was rather a matter of curiosity than benevolence.

However, advances were still made, and even became more pressing. Madame la Comtesse de Boufflers, who was very intimate with Madame la Maréchale, sent to inquire after my health, and to propose a visit on her part. I returned her a proper answer, but did not shift my ground. On the occasion of his Easter journey in the year following, 1759, the Chevalier de Lorenzi, who be-

longed to the court of Monsieur le Prince de Conti, and was intimate with Madame de Luxembourg, came several times to see me, and we became acquainted; he pressed me to go to the château, but I refused to comply. At length one afternoon, when I least expected anything of the kind, I saw coming up to the house Monsieur le Maréchal de Luxembourg, followed by five or six persons. There were now no longer any means of defence; and I could not, without being arrogant and unmannerly, do otherwise than return this visit, and make my court to Madame la Maréchale, from whom he had been the bearer of the most obliging compliments to me. Thus, under unfortunate auspices, began those connections from which I could no longer preserve myself, although a too well-founded foresight made me afraid of them until they were formed.

I was excessively afraid of Madame de Luxembourg. I knew that she had an engaging manner. I had seen her several times at the theatre, and at the house of Madame Dupin, ten or twelve years before, when she was Duchesse de Boufflers, and in the bloom of youthful beauty; but she was said to have a spice of malice, and this in a woman of her rank made me tremble. I had scarcely seen her before I was subjugated. I thought her charming, with that charm proof against time, and which had the fullest power upon my heart. I expected to find her conversation satirical and full of pleasantries and points. It was not so: it was much better. The conversation of Madame de Luxembourg is not remarkably full of wit; it has no sallies, nor even finesse; it is exquisitely delicate, never striking, but always pleasing. Her flattery is the more intoxicating as it is natural; it seems to escape her involuntarily, and her heart to overflow because it is too full. I thought I perceived on my first visit that, notwithstanding my awkward manner and

embarrassed expression, I was not displeasing to her. All the women of the Court know how to persuade us of this when they please, whether it be true or not; but they do not all, like Madame de Luxembourg, possess the art of rendering that persuasion so agreeable that we are no longer disposed ever to have a doubt remaining. From the first day my confidence in her would have been as full as it soon afterwards became, had not the Duchesse de Montmorency, her daughter-in-law, young, giddy, somewhat malicious, and, I think, inclined to raise quarrels, taken it into her head to attack me, and in the midst of the eulogiums of her mamma, and feigned allurements on her own account, made me suspect that I was only considered as a subject of ridicule.

I should perhaps have found it difficult to relieve myself from this fear with these two ladies had not the extreme goodness of Monsieur le Maréchal confirmed me in the belief that their regard was real. Nothing is more surprising, considering my timidity, than the promptitude with which I took him at his word on the footing of equality to which he would absolutely reduce himself with me, except it be that with which he took me at mine with respect to the absolute independence in which I desired to live. Both persuaded that I had reason to be contented with my situation, and that I was unwilling to change it, neither he nor Madame de Luxembourg seemed to think a moment of my purse or fortune: although I can have no doubt of the tender concern they had for me, they never proposed to me a place nor offered me their interest, except it were once, when Madame de Luxembourg seemed to wish me to become a member of the Académie Française. I alleged my religion; this she told me was no obstacle, or if it were one she engaged to remove it. I answered that, however great the honour of becoming a member of so illustrious a body might be,

having refused Monsieur de Tressan, and, in some measure, the King of Poland, to become a member of the Academy at Nancy, I could not with propriety enter into any other. Madame de Luxembourg did not insist, and nothing more was said upon the subject. This simplicity of intercourse with persons of such rank, and who had the power of doing anything in my favour — Monsieur de Luxembourg being, and highly deserving to be, the particular friend of the King — affords a singular contrast with the continual cares, no less importunate than officious, of the friends and protectors from whom I had just separated, and who endeavoured less to serve me than to render me contemptible.

When Monsieur le Maréchal came to see me at Mont-Louis, I was uneasy at receiving him and his retinue in my only chamber; not because I was obliged to make him sit down in the midst of my dirty plates and broken pots, but on account of the floor, which was rotten and falling to ruin, and I was afraid that the weight of his attendants would entirely sink it. Less concerned on account of my own danger than for that to which the affability of this worthy nobleman exposed him, I hastened to remove him from it by conducting him, notwithstanding the coldness of the weather, to my donjon, which was quite open to the air, and had no fireplace. When he was there I told him my reason for having brought him to it. He told it to his lady, and they both pressed me to accept, until the floor was repaired, a lodging at the château; or, if I preferred it, in a separate edifice called the Petit Château, which was in the middle of the park. This delightful abode deserves to be spoken of.

The park or garden of Montmorency is not a plain, like that of La Chevrette. It is uneven, mountainous, disposed in little hills and valleys, of which the able artist

has taken advantage, and thereby varied his groves, ornaments, waters, and points of view, and, if I may so speak, multiplied by art and genius a space in itself rather confined. This park is terminated at the top by a terrace and the château; at bottom it forms a gorge which opens and becomes wider towards the valley, the angle of which is filled up with a large piece of water. Between the orangery, which is in this widening, and the piece of water, the banks of which are agreeably decorated with shrubs and trees, stands the Petit Château of which I have spoken. This edifice and the ground about it formerly belonged to the celebrated Le Brun, who amused himself in building and decorating it in the exquisite taste for architectural ornament which that great painter had cultivated. The château has since been rebuilt, but still according to the plan and design of its first master. It is little and simple, but elegant. As it stands in a hollow between the basin of the orangery and the large piece of water, and consequently is liable to dampness, it is pierced in the middle by an open peristyle between two rows of columns, by which means the air circulating throughout the whole edifice keeps it dry, notwithstanding its situation. When the building is seen from the opposite elevation, which is a point of view, it appears absolutely surrounded with water, and we imagine we have before our eyes an enchanted island, or the most beautiful of the three Borromeans, called Isola Bella, in the Lago Maggiore.

In this solitary edifice I was offered the choice of four complete suites of rooms that it contains, besides the ground-floor, consisting of a ball-room, billiard-room, and a kitchen. I chose the smallest, over the kitchen, which also I had with it. It was charmingly neat, with blue and white furniture. In this profound and delicious solitude, in the midst of woods and waters, the singing of

birds of every kind, and the perfume of orange flowers, I composed, in a continual ecstasy, the fifth book of *Émile*, the colouring of which I owed in a great measure to the lively impression I received from the place in which I wrote.

With what eagerness did I run every morning at sunrise to respire the perfumed air on the peristyle! What excellent coffee I took there *tête-à-tête* with my Thérèse! My cat and dog were our company. This retinue alone would have been sufficient for me during my whole life, in which I should not have had one weary moment. I was there in a terrestrial paradise; I lived in like innocence and tasted of like happiness.

At their visit of July, Monsieur and Madame de Luxembourg showed me so much attention, and were so extremely kind, that, lodged in their house, and overwhelmed with their goodness, I could not do less than make them a proper return in assiduous respect. I scarcely quitted them. I went in the morning to pay my court to Madame la Maréchale; after dinner I walked with Monsieur le Maréchal; but did not sup at the château on account of the numerous guests, and because they supped too late for me. Thus far everything was as it should be, and no harm would have been done could I have remained at this point. But I have never known how to preserve a medium in my attachments, and simply fulfil the duties of society. I have always been everything or nothing. I was soon everything; and, receiving the most flattering attention from persons of the highest rank, I passed the proper bounds, and conceived for them a friendship not permitted except among equals. Of these I had all the familiarity in my manners, whilst they still preserved in theirs the same politeness to which they had accustomed me. Yet I was never quite at ease with Madame la Maréchale. Al-

though I was not quite relieved from my fears relative to her character, I apprehended less danger from it than from her wit. It was by this especially that she impressed me with awe. I knew she was difficult as to conversation, and she had a right to be so. I knew that women, especially those of her rank, would absolutely be amused; that it was better to offend than to weary them; and I judged by her commentaries upon what the people who went away had said what she must think of my blunders. I thought of an expedient to spare me with her the embarrassment of speaking: this was reading. She had heard of *Julie*, and knew it was in the press; she expressed a desire to see the work; I offered to read it to her, and she accepted my offer. I went to her every morning at ten o'clock; Monsieur de Luxembourg was present, and the door was shut. I read by the side of her bed, and so well proportioned my readings that there would have been sufficient for the whole time she had to stay, even had no interruption occurred.[1] The success of this expedient surpassed my expectation. Madame de Luxembourg took a great liking to *Julie* and its author; she spoke of nothing but me, thought of nothing else, said civil things to me from morning till night, and embraced me ten times a day. She insisted on my always having my place by her side at table; and when any grands seigneurs wished to take it she told them it was mine, and made them sit somewhere else. The impression these charming manners made upon me, who am subjugated by the least mark of affection, may be easily judged of. I became really attached to her in proportion to the attachment she showed me. All my fear in perceiving this infatuation, and feeling the want of agreeableness in myself to support it, was that it would be

[1] The loss of a great battle, which much affected the King, obliged Monsieur de Luxembourg precipitately to return to court. — R.

changed into disgust; and, unfortunately, this fear was but too well founded.

There must have been a natural opposition between her turn of mind and mine, since, independently of the numerous stupid things which at every instant escaped me in conversation, and even in my letters, and when I was upon the best terms with her, there were certain other things with which she was displeased without my being able to imagine the reason. I will cite but one instance; I might cite twenty. She knew that I was writing for Madame d'Houdetot a copy of the *Héloïse* at so much a page. She was desirous to have one on the same footing. This I promised her; and thereby making her one of my customers, I wrote her a polite letter upon the subject — at least such was my intention. Her answer, which was as follows, stupefied me with surprise (C, No. 43): —

'VERSAILLES, *Tuesday*.

'I am ravished, I am satisfied: your letter has given me infinite pleasure, and I take the earliest moment to acquaint you with and thank you for it.

'These are the exact words of your letter: "Although you are certainly a very good customer, I have some pain in receiving your money: according to regular order I ought to pay for the pleasure I should have in working for you." [1] I will say nothing more on the subject. I have to complain of your never speaking of your state of health: nothing interests me more. I love you with all my heart; and be assured that I write this to you in a very melancholy mood, for I should have much pleasure in telling it you myself. Monsieur de Luxembourg loves and embraces you with all his heart.'

On receiving the letter I hastened to answer it, reserving to myself more fully to examine the matter, protest-

[1] 'Quoique vous soyez sûrement une très-bonne pratique, je me fais quelque peine de prendre votre argent; régulièrement, ce serait à moi de payer le plaisir que j'aurais de travailler pour vous.'

ing against all disobliging interpretation; and after having given several days to this examination, with an inquietude which may easily be conceived, and still without finding a solution, what follows was my final answer on the subject: —

'Montmorency, *8th December*, 1759.

'Since my last letter I have examined a hundred times and more the passage in question. I have considered it in its proper and natural meaning, as well as in every other which may be given to it, and I confess to you, Madame la Maréchale, that I know not whether it be I who owe you excuses, or you from whom they are due to me.'

It is now ten years since these letters were written. I have since that time frequently thought of the subject of them; and such is still my stupidity that I have hitherto been unable to discover what, in the passage quoted from my letter, she could find offensive, or even displeasing.

I must here mention, relative to the manuscript copy of the *Héloïse* that Madame de Luxembourg wished to have, in what manner I thought to give it some marked advantage which should distinguish it from all others. I had written separately the adventures of Milord Édouard, and had long been undetermined whether I should insert them wholly, or in extracts, in the work in which they seemed to be wanting. I at length determined to retrench them entirely, because, not being in the manner of the rest of the book, they would have spoiled its interesting simplicity. I had a still stronger reason when I came to know Madame de Luxembourg. There was in these adventures a Roman marchioness of odious character, some traits of whose character, without being applicable, might have been applied to her by those to whom she was not particularly known. I was, therefore, highly pleased with the determination to which I had come, and resolved to abide by it. But, in the ardent

desire to enrich her copy with something which was not in any other, what should I fall upon but these unfortunate adventures? and I concluded on making an extract from them to add to the work: a project dictated by madness, of which the extravagance is inexplicable, except by the blind fatality which led me on to destruction.

'Quos vult perdere Jupiter dementat.'

I was stupid enough to make this extract with the greatest care and pains, and to send it her as the finest thing in the world. It is true, I at the same time informed her that the original was burned, which was really the case; that the extract was for her alone, and would never be seen, except by herself, unless she chose to show it; which, far from proving to her my prudence and discretion, as it was my intention to do, clearly intimated what I thought of the application by which she might be offended. My stupidity was such that I had no doubt of her being delighted with what I had done. She did not make me the great compliment upon it which I had expected, and, to my great surprise, never once mentioned the packet I had sent her. I was so satisfied with myself that it was not until a long time afterwards that I judged, from other indications, of the effect it had produced.[1]

I had still, in favour of her manuscript, another idea more reasonable, but which, by more distant effects, has not been much less prejudicial to me; so much does everything concur with the work of Destiny, when she hurries on a man to misfortune. I thought of ornamenting the manuscript with the drawings made for the

[1] As the lady afterwards sent this manuscript — *Les Amours d'Édouard Bomston* — to the Genevan publishers of Rousseau's works, it is not probable that she perceived any likeness between herself and the Roman marchioness.

engravings of *Julie*, which were of the same size. I asked Coindet for these designs, which belonged to me by every kind of title, and the more so as I had given him the produce of the plates, which had a considerable sale. Coindet is as cunning as I am the contrary. By frequently asking him for the drawings, he came to the knowledge of the use I intended to make of them. He then, under pretence of adding some new ornaments, still kept them from me, and at length presented them himself.

'Ego versiculos feci, tulit alter honores.'

This gave him an introduction upon a certain footing to the Hôtel de Luxembourg. After my establishment at the Petit Château he came rather frequently to see me, and always in the morning, especially when Monsieur and Madame de Luxembourg were at Montmorency. Therefore, that I might pass the day with him, I did not go to the château. Reproaches were made to me on account of my absences; I told the reason. I was desired to bring with me Monsieur Coindet; I did so. This was what the rogue had sought after. Therefore, thanks to the excessive goodness shown to me, a clerk to Monsieur Thélusson, who was sometimes pleased to give him a seat at his table when he had nobody else to dine with him, was suddenly placed at that of a maréchal of France, with princesses, duchesses, and persons of the highest rank at court. I shall never forget that one day, being obliged to return early to Paris, the Maréchal said, after dinner, to the company, 'Let us take a walk upon the road to Saint-Denis; we will accompany Monsieur Coindet.' This was too much for the poor man; his head was quite turned. For my part, my heart was so affected that I could not say a word. I followed the company, weeping like a child, and having the strongest desire to kiss the footsteps of the good Maréchal — but the continuation

of the history of the manuscript has made me anticipate. Let us go back and follow the order of time, so far as memory will permit.

As soon as the little house at Mont-Louis was ready, I had it neatly and simply furnished, and again established myself there. I could not break through the resolution I had made on quitting the Hermitage of always having my lodging to myself; but I found a difficulty in resolving to quit my rooms in the Petit Château. I kept the key, and, being delighted with the charming breakfasts in the peristyle, frequently went thither to sleep, and stayed three or four days as at a country house. I was at that time perhaps better and more agreeably lodged than any private individual in Europe. My host, Monsieur Mathas, one of the best men in the world, had left me the absolute direction of the repairs at Mont-Louis, and insisted upon my disposing of his workmen without his interference. I therefore found the means of making of a single chamber upon the first story a complete set of apartments, consisting of a chamber, antechamber, and retiring closet. Upon the ground-floor was the kitchen and Thérèse's chamber. The donjon served me for a study by means of a glazed partition, and a fireplace had been made there. After my return to this habitation, I amused myself in decorating the terrace, which was already shaded by two rows of young lindens. I added two others to make a cabinet of verdure, and placed in it a table and stone benches. I surrounded it with lilac, seringa, and woodbines, and had a beautiful border of flowers parallel with the two rows of trees. This terrace, more elevated than that of the château, from which the view was at least as fine, and where I had tamed a great number of birds, was my drawing-room, in which I received Monsieur and Madame de Luxembourg, Monsieur le Duc de Villeroy, Monsieur le Prince de

Tingry, Monsieur le Marquis d'Armentières, Madame la Duchesse de Montmorency, Madame la Duchesse de Boufflers, Madame la Comtesse de Valentinois, Madame la Comtesse de Boufflers, and other persons of their rank; who, from the château, disdained not to make, over a very fatiguing ascent, the pilgrimage of Mont-Louis. I owed all these visits to the favour of Monsieur and Madame de Luxembourg; this I felt, and my heart on that account did them all due homage. It was when filled with similar feelings that I once said to Monsieur de Luxembourg, embracing him: 'Ah! Monsieur le Maréchal, I hated the great before I knew you, and I have hated them still more since you have shown me with what ease they might acquire universal respect.

Further than this, I defy any person with whom I was then acquainted to say that I was ever dazzled for an instant with splendour, or that the vapour of the incense I received ever affected my head; that I was less uniform in my manner, less plain in my dress, less easy of access to common people, less familiar with neighbours, or less ready to render service to every person when I had it in my power so to do, without ever once being discouraged by the numerous and frequently unreasonable importunities with which I was incessantly assailed. Although my heart led me to the Château of Montmorency by my sincere attachment to its owners, it by the same means drew me back to my own neighbourhood, there to taste the sweets of the equable and simple life in which my only happiness consists. Thérèse had contracted a friendship with the daughter of one of my neighbours, a mason named Pilleu. I did the same with the father. And after having dined in the morning at the château, not without some constraint, to please Madame la Maréchale, with what eagerness did I return in the evening to sup with

the good man Pilleu and his family, sometimes at his own house and at others at mine!

Besides my two lodgings in the country, I soon had a third at the Hôtel de Luxembourg, the proprietors of which pressed me so much to go and see them there now and then that I consented, notwithstanding my aversion to Paris, where, since my retiring to the Hermitage, I had been but twice, upon the two occasions of which I have spoken. I did not now go there except on the days agreed upon, solely to supper, and the next morning I returned home. I entered and left by the garden which faces the boulevard, so that I could with the greatest truth say that I had not set my foot upon the stones of Paris.

In the midst of this transient prosperity, a catastrophe, which was to be the conclusion of it, was preparing at a distance. A short time after my return to Mont-Louis I made there — and, as was customary, against my inclination — a new acquaintance, which makes another epoch in my history. Whether this be favourable or unfavourable, the reader will hereafter be able to judge. The person was the Madame la Marquise de Verdelin, my neighbour, whose husband had just bought a country house at Soisy, near Montmorency. Mademoiselle d'Ars, daughter of the Comte d'Ars, a man of quality, but poor, had espoused Monsieur de Verdelin, old, ugly, deaf, uncouth, brutal, jealous, with scars on his face and blind of one eye, but, upon the whole, a pretty good man when properly managed, and in possession of a fortune of from fifteen to twenty thousand livres a year, to which they had married her. This charming object — swearing, roaring, scolding, storming, and making his wife cry all day long — ended by doing whatever she thought proper, and this to set her in a rage, seeing that she would fain persuade him that it was he who would, and she who would not have it so. Monsieur de Margency,

of whom I have spoken, was the friend of Madame, and became that of Monsieur. He had a few years before let them his château of Margency, near Eaubonne and Andilly, and they resided there precisely at the time of my passion for Madame d'Houdetot. Madame d'Houdetot and Madame de Verdelin became acquainted with each other by means of Madame d'Aubeterre, their common friend; and as the garden of Margency was in the road by which Madame d'Houdetot went to Mont-Olympe, her favourite walk, Madame de Verdelin gave her a key that she might pass through it. By means of this key I crossed it several times with her; but I did not like unexpected meetings, and when Madame de Verdelin was by chance upon our way I left them together without speaking to her, and went on before. This want of gallantry must have made on her an impression unfavourable to me. Yet when she was at Soisy she was anxious to have my company. She came several times to see me at Mont-Louis, without finding me at home; and perceiving that I did not return her visit, she took it into her head, as a means of forcing me to do it, to send me pots of flowers for my terrace. I was under the necessity of going to thank her; this was all she wanted, and we thus became acquainted.

This connection, like every other that I was led into contrary to my inclination, began rather boisterously. There never reigned in it a real calm. The turn of mind of Madame de Verdelin was far too opposite to mine. Bitter sayings and pointed sarcasms came from her with so much simplicity, that a continual attention, too fatiguing for me, was necessary to detect when she was mocking the hearer. One trivial circumstance which occurs to my recollection will be sufficient to give an idea of her manner. Her brother had just obtained the command of a frigate cruising against the English. I

spoke of the manner of fitting out this frigate without diminishing its swiftness of sailing. 'Yes,' replied she in the most natural tone of voice, 'no more cannon are taken than are necessary for fighting.' I seldom have heard her speak well of any of her absent friends without letting slip something to their prejudice. What she did not see with an evil eye she looked upon with one of ridicule, and her friend Margency was not excepted. What I found most insupportable in her was the perpetual constraint proceeding from her little messages, presents, and billets, which it was a labour for me to answer, and I had continual embarrassments either in thanking or refusing. However, by frequently seeing this lady, I became attached to her. She had her troubles as I had mine. Reciprocal confidence rendered our conversations interesting. Nothing so cordially attaches two persons as the satisfaction of weeping together. We sought the company of each other for our consolation, and the want of this has frequently made me pass over many things. I had been so severe in my frankness with her, that, after having sometimes shown so little esteem for her character, a great deal was necessary to enable me to believe that she could sincerely forgive me. The following letter is a specimen of the epistles I sometimes wrote to her, and it is to be remarked that she never once in any of her answers to them seemed to be in the least degree piqued.

'MONTMORENCY, *5th November*, 1760.

'You tell me, madame, that you have not explained yourself, in order to make me understand that I have explained myself ill. You speak of your pretended stupidity for the purpose of making me feel my own. You boast of being nothing more than a good kind of woman, as if you were afraid to be taken at your word, and you make me apologies to let me know that I owe them to you. Yes, madame, I know it; it is I who am the fool, a simple kind of man; and, if it be

possible, worse than all this; it is I who made a bad choice of my expressions in the opinion of a fine French lady, who pays as much attention to words and speaks as well as you do. But consider that I take them in the common meaning of the language, without knowing or troubling my head about the polite acceptations in which they are taken in the virtuous societies of Paris. If my expressions are sometimes equivocal, I endeavour by my conduct to determine their meaning,' etc.

The rest of the letter is much the same. See the reply to it (D, No. 41), and judge therefrom the incredible moderation that reigns in the heart of a woman who could entertain no more resentment against such a letter than that reply shows, nor ever exhibited any sign of such resentment to me. Coindet, enterprising, bold even to effrontery, and who was upon the watch after all my friends, soon introduced himself in my name to the house of Madame de Verdelin, and, unknown to me, shortly became there more familiar than myself. This Coindet was an extraordinary man. He presented himself in my name in the houses of all my acquaintance, gained a footing in them, and ate there without ceremony. Transported with zeal to do me service, he never mentioned my name without tears; but, when he came to see me, he kept the most profound silence on the subject of all these connections, and of everything in which he knew I must be interested. Instead of telling me what he had heard, said, or seen, relative to my affairs, he merely listened, and even interrogated me. He never knew anything of what passed in Paris, except that which I told him. Finally, although everybody spoke to me of him, he never once spoke to me of any person; he was secret and mysterious with his friend only. But I will, for the present, leave Coindet and Madame de Verdelin, and revert to them at a proper time.

Some time after my return to Mont-Louis, La Tour,

the painter, came to see me, and brought with him my portrait in crayons, which a few years before he had exhibited at the Salon. He had wished to give me this portrait, which I did not choose to accept. But Madame d'Épinay, who had given me hers, and would have had this, prevailed upon me to ask him for it. He had taken some time to retouch it. In the interval happened my rupture with Madame d'Épinay. I returned her portrait, and giving her mine being no longer in question, I put it into my chamber in the Petit Château. Monsieur de Luxembourg saw it there, and thought it a good one; I offered it to him, he accepted it, and I sent it to him. He and Madame la Maréchale comprehended that I should be glad to have theirs. They had them taken in miniature by a very skilful hand, set in a box of rock crystal, mounted with gold, and in a very handsome manner, with which I was delighted, presented them to me. Madame de Luxembourg would never consent that her portrait should be on the upper part of the box. She had reproached me several times with loving Monsieur de Luxembourg better than her; I had not denied it, because it was true. By this manner of placing her portrait she showed, very politely, but very clearly, that she had not forgotten the preference.

Much about this time I was guilty of a folly which did not contribute to preserve to me her good graces. Although I had no knowledge of Monsieur de Silhouette, and was not much disposed to like him, I had a great opinion of his administration. When he began to let his hand fall rather heavily upon financiers, I perceived that he did not begin his operation in a favourable moment; but he had my warmest wishes for his success, and as soon as I heard that he was displaced, I wrote to him, in my heedless manner, the following letter, which I certainly do not undertake to justify: —

'MONTMORENCY, *2nd December, 1759.*

'Vouchsafe, monsieur, to receive the homage of a solitary man, who is not known to you, but who esteems you for your talents, respects you for your administration, and who did you the honour to believe you would not long remain in it. Unable to save the State, except at the expense of the capital by which it has been ruined, you have braved the clamours of the money-seekers. When I saw you crush these wretches, I envied you your place; and at seeing you quit it without retractation, I admire you. Be satisfied with yourself, monsieur; the step that you have taken will leave you an honour which you will long enjoy without a competitor. The malediction of knaves is the glory of an honest man.'

[1760.] Madame de Luxembourg, who knew I had written this letter, spoke to me of it when she came into the country at Easter. I showed it to her, and she was desirous of a copy; this I gave her, but when I did it I did not know that she was one of those money-seekers who were concerned in the sub-farming of the taxes, and in the displacing of Monsieur de Silhouette. By my numerous follies any person would have imagined that I wilfully endeavoured to bring on myself the hatred of an amiable woman who had power; to whom, in truth, I daily became more attached, and whose displeasure I was far from desiring to incur, although by my awkward manner of proceeding I did everything proper for that purpose. I think it is almost superfluous to remark here that it is to her that the story of the opiate of Monsieur Tronchin, of which I have spoken in the first part, relates; the other lady was Madame de Mirepoix. They have never mentioned to me the circumstances, nor has either of them seemed to have preserved the least remembrance of it; but to presume that Madame de Luxembourg can possibly have forgotten it, appears to me very difficult, and would still remain so, even were the subsequent events entirely unknown. For my part, I fell into a

deceitful security relative to the effects of my stupid mistakes, by an internal consciousness of my not having taken any step with an intention to offend, as if a woman could ever pardon such things, although she might be certain that the will had not the least part in the matter.

Although she seemed not to see or feel anything, and though I did not immediately find either her warmth of friendship diminished or the least change in her manner, the continuation and even increase of a too well-founded foreboding made me incessantly tremble, lest indifference should succeed to infatuation. Was it possible for me to expect in a lady of such high rank a constancy proof against my want of address to support it? I was unable to conceal from her this secret foreboding, which made me uneasy, and rendered me still more disagreeable. This will be judged of by the following letter, which contains a very singular prediction.

*N.B.* — This letter, without date in my rough copy, was written in October 1760 at latest.

'How cruel is your goodness! Why disturb the peace of a solitary mortal, who had renounced the pleasures of life that he might no longer suffer the fatigues of them? I have passed my days in vainly searching for solid attachments. I have not been able to form any in the ranks to which I was equal; is it in yours that I ought to seek for them? Neither ambition nor interest can tempt me. I am not vain, and but little fearful. I can resist everything except caresses. Why, then, do you both attack me by a weakness which I must overcome, seeing that in the distance by which we are separated the overflowings of susceptible hearts cannot bring mine near to you? Will gratitude be sufficient for a heart which knows not two manners of bestowing its affections, and feels itself incapable of everything except friendship? Of friendship, Madame la Maréchale! Ah! there is my misfortune. It is good in you and Monsieur le Maréchal to make use of this expression; but I am mad when I take you at your word. You amuse yourselves, and I become attached; and the end of the

game prepares for me new regrets. How do I hate all your titles, and pity you in being obliged to bear them! You seem to me to be so worthy of tasting the charms of private life! Why do you not reside at Clarens? I would go there in search of happiness; but the Château de Montmorency, and the Hôtel de Luxembourg! Is it in these places that Jean-Jacques ought to be seen? Is it thither that a friend to equality ought to carry the affection of a sensible heart, and who, thus paying the esteem in which he is held, thinks he renders as much as he receives? You are good and susceptible also: this I know and have seen. I am sorry I was not sooner convinced of it; but in the rank you hold, in your manner of living, nothing can make a lasting impression: new objects succeed and efface each other so that not one of them remains. You will forget me, madame, after having made it impossible for me to imitate you. You will have done a great deal to render me unhappy, and to be inexcusable.'

I joined with her Monsieur de Luxembourg, to render the compliment less severe; for I was moreover so sure of him that I never had a doubt in my mind of the continuance of his friendship. Nothing that intimidated me in Madame de Maréchale ever for a moment extended to him. I never have had the least mistrust relative to his character, which I knew to be feeble, but constant. I no more feared a coldness on his part than I expected from him an heroic attachment. The simplicity and familiarity of our manners with each other proved how far dependence was reciprocal. We were both always right. I shall ever honour and hold dear the memory of this worthy nobleman, and, notwithstanding everything that was done to detach him from me, I am as certain of his having died my friend as if I had received his latest breath.

At the second journey to Montmorency, in the year 1760, the reading of *Julie* being finished, I had recourse to that of *Émile*, to support myself in the good graces of Madame de Luxembourg; but this, whether the subject

was less to her taste or that so much reading at length fatigued her, did not succeed so well. However, as she reproached me with suffering myself to be the dupe of booksellers, she wished me to leave to her care the printing of the work, that I might reap from it a greater advantage. I consented to her doing so, on the express condition of its not being printed in France, on which we had a long dispute, I affirming that it was impossible to obtain, and even imprudent to solicit, a tacit permission, and being unwilling to permit the impression upon any other terms in the kingdom; she, that the censor could not make the least difficulty according to the system Government had adopted. She found means to make Monsieur de Malesherbes enter into her views. He wrote to me on the subject a long letter with his own hand, to prove the *Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar* to be a composition which must everywhere gain the approbation of mankind, and that of the Court as things were then circumstanced. I was surprised to see this magistrate, always so cautious, become so smooth in the business. As the printing of a book of which he approved was by that alone legal, I had no longer any objection to make regarding this work. Yet by an extraordinary scruple I still required that it should be printed in Holland, and by the bookseller Néaulme, whom, not satisfied with indicating, I informed of my wishes, consenting, moreover, that the edition should be brought out for the profit of a French bookseller, and that as soon as it was ready it should be sold at Paris, or wherever else it might be thought proper, for with this I had no manner of concern. This is exactly what was agreed upon between Madame de Luxembourg and myself, after which I gave her my manuscript.

She was this time accompanied by her granddaughter, Mademoiselle de Boufflers, now Madame

la Duchesse de Lauzun. Her name was Amélie. She was a charming girl. She really had a maiden beauty, mildness, and timidity. Nothing could be more lovely and engaging than her person, nothing more chaste and tender than the sentiments she inspired. She was, besides, still a child under eleven years of age. Madame la Maréchale, who thought her too timid, used every endeavour to animate her. She permitted me several times to give her a kiss, which I did with my usual awkwardness. Instead of saying pretty things to her, as any other person would have done, I remained silent and disconcerted, and I know not which of the two, the little girl or myself, was most ashamed. I met her one day alone on the staircase of the Petit Château. She had been to see Thérèse, with whom her governess still was. Not knowing what else to say, I proposed to her a kiss, which, in the innocence of her heart, she did not refuse, having in the morning received one from me by order of her grandmother, and in her presence. The next day, while reading *Émile* by the bedside of Madame de Luxembourg, I came to a passage in which I justly censure that which I had done the preceding evening. She thought the reflection extremely just, and said some very sensible things upon the subject, which made me blush. How enraged was I at my incredible stupidity, which has so often given me the appearance of baseness and guilt, when I was nothing more than a fool and embarrassed! a stupidity which, in a man known to be endowed with some wit, is considered as a false excuse. I can safely swear that in this reprehensible kiss, as well as in the others, the heart and feelings of Mademoiselle Amélie were not more pure than my own, and that if I could have avoided meeting her I should have done it — not that I had not great pleasure in seeing her, but from the embarrassment of not finding a happy word to say in

passing. Whence comes it that even a child can intimidate a man whom the power of kings has never inspired with fear? What is to be done? How, without presence of mind, am I to act? If I strive to speak to the persons I meet, I infallibly say some stupid thing; if I remain silent I am a misanthrope, an unsociable animal, a bear. Total imbecility would have been more favourable to me, but the talents which I have lacked in the world have become the instruments of my destruction, and of that of the talents I possessed.

At the latter end of this sojourn Madame de Luxembourg did a good action, in which I had some share. Diderot having very imprudently offended Madame la Princesse de Robeck, daughter of Monsieur de Luxembourg, Palissot, whom she protected, avenged her by the comedy of *Les Philosophes*, in which I was ridiculed, and Diderot very roughly handled. The author treated me with more gentleness, less, I am of opinion, on account of the obligation he was under to me than from the fear of displeasing the father of his protectress, by whom he knew I was beloved. The bookseller Duchesne, with whom I was not at that time acquainted, sent me this piece when it was printed, and this I suspect was by the order of Palissot, who perhaps thought I should have a pleasure in seeing a man with whom I was no longer connected defamed. He was greatly deceived. When I broke with Diderot, whom I thought less ill-natured than weak and indiscreet, I still always preserved for him an attachment, an esteem even, and a respect for our ancient friendship, which I know was for a long time as sincere on his part as on mine. The case was quite different with Grimm, a man false by nature, who never loved me, who is not even capable of friendship, and a person who, out of mere wantonness, without the least subject of complaint, and solely to satisfy his gloomy jealousy, became,

under the mask of friendship, my most cruel calumniator. This man is to me but a cipher; the other will always be my old friend. My very bowels yearned at the sight of this odious piece; the reading of it was insupportable to me, and, without going through the whole, I returned the copy to Duchesne with the following letter: —

'MONTMORENCY, 21*st May*, 1760.

'In casting my eye over the piece you sent me, Monsieur, I trembled at seeing myself well spoken of in it. I do not accept the horrid present. I am persuaded that in sending it to me you did not intend an insult; but you do not know, or have forgotten, that I have the honour to be the friend of a respectable man who is shamefully defamed and calumniated in this libel.'

Duchesne showed this letter. Diderot, upon whom it ought to have had an effect quite contrary, was vexed at it. His pride could not forgive me the superiority of a generous action, and I was informed that his wife everywhere inveighed against me with a bitterness with which I was not affected, as I knew that she was known to everybody as a noisy babbler.

Diderot in his turn found an avenger in the Abbé Morellet, who wrote against Palissot a little work, imitated from the *Petit Prophète*, and entitled *La Vision*. In this production he very imprudently offended Madame de Robeck, whose friends got him sent to the Bastille, though she, not naturally vindictive, and at that time in a dying state, I am certain had nothing to do in the affair.

D'Alembert, who was very intimately connected with Morellet, wrote me a letter desiring that I would beg of Madame de Luxembourg to solicit his liberty, promising her in return encomiums in the *Encyclopédie*.[1] My answer to his letter was as follows: —

[1] This letter, with many others, disappeared from the Hôtel de Luxembourg, while my papers were deposited there. — R.

'I did not wait the receipt of your letter, Monsieur, before I expressed to Madame la Maréchale de Luxembourg the concern that the confinement of the Abbé Morellet gave me. She knows the interest I take in this, and shall be made acquainted with yours, and her knowing that the abbé is a man of merit will be sufficient to make her interest herself in his behalf. However, although she and the Maréchal honour me with a benevolence which is my greatest consolation, and that the name of your friend be to them a recommendation in favour of the Abbé Morellet, I know not how far on this occasion it may be proper for them to employ the credit attached to the rank they hold, and the consideration due to their persons. I am not even convinced that the vengeance in question relates to Madame la Princesse de Robeck so much as you seem to imagine; and, even were this the case, we must not suppose that the pleasure of vengeance belongs to philosophers exclusively, and that when they choose to become women, women will become philosophers.

'I will communicate to you whatever Madame de Luxembourg may say to me after having shown her your letter. In the meantime, I think I know her well enough to assure you beforehand, that, should she have the pleasure of contributing to the release of the Abbé Morellet, she will not accept the tribute of acknowledgment you promise her in the *Encyclopédie*, although she might think herself honoured by it, because she does not do good in the expectation of praise, but from the dictates of her heart.'

I made every effort to excite the zeal and commiseration of Madame de Luxembourg in favour of the poor captive, and succeeded to my wishes. She went to Versailles on purpose to speak to Monsieur le Comte de Saint-Florentin, and this journey shortened the residence at Montmorency, which Monsieur le Maréchal was obliged to quit at the same time to go to Rouen, whither the King sent him as Governor of Normandy, on account of some motions of the Parliament, which Government wished to keep within bounds. Madame de Luxembourg wrote me the following letter two days after her departure (D, No. 23): —

'VERSAILLES, *Wednesday.*

'Monsieur de Luxembourg set off yesterday morning at six o'clock. I do not know yet whether I shall follow him. I wait until he writes to me, as he is not yet certain of the stay it will be necessary for him to make. I have seen Monsieur de Saint-Florentin, who is as favourably disposed as possible towards the Abbé Morellet, but he finds some obstacles to his wishes, which, however, he is in hopes of removing the first time he has to do business with the King, which will be next week. I have also desired as a favour that he might not be exiled, because this was intended: he was to be sent to Nancy. This, Monsieur, is what I have been able to obtain, but I promise you I will not let Monsieur de Saint-Florentin rest until the affair is terminated in the manner you desire. Let me now express to you how sorry I am on account of my being obliged to leave you so soon, but I flatter myself you do not doubt this. I love you with all my heart, and shall do so for my whole life.'

A few days afterwards I received the following note from D'Alembert, which gave me real joy (D, No. 26): —

'*August 1st.*

'Thanks to your cares, my dear philosopher, the Abbé has left the Bastille, and his imprisonment will have no other consequence. He is setting off for the country, and, as well as myself, returns you a thousand thanks and compliments. *Vale, et me ama.*'

The Abbé also wrote to me a few days afterwards a letter of thanks (D, No. 29), which, in my opinion, failed to breathe a certain effusion of the heart, and in which he seemed in some measure to extenuate the service I had rendered him. Some time afterwards, I found that he and D'Alembert had, in some sort, I will not say supplanted, but succeeded me in the good graces of Madame de Luxembourg, and that I had lost in this respect as much as they had gained. However, I am far from suspecting the Abbé Morellet of having contributed to my disgrace. I have too much esteem for him to harbour

any such suspicion. With respect to D'Alembert, I shall at present leave him out of the question, and shall speak of him again hereafter.

I had, at the same time, another affair which occasioned the last letter that I wrote to Voltaire — a letter against which he vehemently exclaimed, as an abominable insult, although he never showed it to any persons. I will here supply the want of that which he refused to do.

The Abbé Trublet, with whom I had a slight acquaintance, but whom I had but seldom seen, wrote to me on the 13th of June, 1760 (D, No. 11), informing me that Monsieur Formey, his friend and correspondent, had printed, in his journal, my letter to Voltaire upon the disaster at Lisbon. The Abbé wished to know how the letter came to be printed, and, in his shrewd, jesuitical manner, asked me my opinion, without giving me his own, on the necessity of reprinting it. As I most sovereignly hate tricksters of his kind, I returned such thanks as were proper, but in a manner so reserved as to make him feel it, although it did not prevent him from wheedling me in two or three other letters until he had gathered all that he wished to know.

I clearly understood, notwithstanding all Trublet could say, that Formey had not found the letter printed, and that the first impression of it came from himself. I knew him to be an impudent pilferer, who, without ceremony, made himself a revenue by the works of others, although he had not yet had the vile effrontery to take from a book already published the name of the author, to put his own in its place, and to sell the book for his own profit.[1] But by what means had this manuscript fallen into his hands? That was a question easy to resolve, but by which I had the weakness to be embarrassed. Although Voltaire was excessively honoured by the letter,

[1] In this manner he afterwards appropriated *Émile*. — R.

he would yet, notwithstanding his rude proceedings, have had a right to complain had I printed it without his consent, so I resolved to write to him upon the subject. The second letter was as follows, to which he returned no answer, and with which, giving greater scope to his brutality, he feigned to be irritated to fury: —

'MONTMORENCY, *17th June*, 1760.

'I did not think, Monsieur, I should ever have occasion to correspond with you again. But, learning that the letter I wrote to you in 1756 has been printed at Berlin, I owe you an account of my conduct in that respect, and will fulfil this duty with truth and simplicity.

'The letter having been directly addressed to you, was not intended to be printed. I communicated the contents of it, on certain conditions, to three persons, to whom the rights of friendship did not permit me to refuse anything of the kind, and whom the same rights still less permitted to abuse my confidence by betraying their promise. These persons are Madame de Chenonceaux, daughter-in-law to Madame Dupin; the Comtesse d'Houdetot; and a German named Monsieur Grimm. Madame de Chenonceaux was desirous that the letter should be printed, and asked my consent; I told her that depended upon yours. This was asked of you, which you refused, and the matter dropped.

'However, Monsieur l'Abbé Trublet, with whom I have not the least connection, has just written to me from a motive of the most polite attention, that having received the sheets of a journal of Monsieur Formey, he found in them this same letter with a note, dated 23rd October, 1759, in which the editor states that he had a few weeks before found it in the shops of the booksellers of Berlin, and, as it is one of those loose sheets which quickly disappear, he thought proper to give it a place in his journal.

'This, Monsieur, is all I know of the matter. It is certain that the letter had not until very lately been even heard of at Paris. It is also as certain that the copy, either in manuscript or print, fallen into the hands of Monsieur Formey, could never have reached them except by your means, which is not probable, or through one of the three persons I have mentioned. Finally,

it is well known that the two ladies are incapable of such a perfidy. I cannot, in my retirement, learn more relative to the affair. You have a wide correspondence, by means of which you may, if you think it worth the trouble, go back to the source and verify the fact.

'In the same letter Monsieur l'Abbé Trublet informs me that he keeps the paper in reserve, and will not lend it without my consent, which most assuredly I will not give. But this copy may not be the only one in Paris. I wish, Monsieur, that the letter may not be printed there, and I will do all in my power to prevent this from happening; but, if I cannot succeed, and that timely perceiving it, I can have the preference, I will not then hesitate to have it immediately printed. This to me appears just and natural.

'With respect to your answer to the same letter, it has not been communicated to any one, and you may be assured it shall not be printed without your consent,[1] which I shall certainly not be indiscreet enough to ask of you, well knowing that what one man writes to another is not written to the public. But should you choose to write one that you wish to have published, and address it to me, I promise you faithfully to add it to my letter, and not to make to it a single word of reply.

'I love you not, Monsieur; you have done me, your disciple and enthusiastic admirer, injuries that might have caused me the most exquisite pain. You have ruined Geneva, in return for the asylum it has afforded you; you have alienated from me my fellow-citizens, in return for the eulogiums I made of you amongst them; it is you who render to me the residence of my own country insupportable; it is you who will oblige me to die in a foreign land, deprived of all the consolations due to the dying, and cause me to be thrown unhonoured upon the common dust-heap, whilst all the honours a man can expect will accompany you in my country. Finally, I hate you because you have been desirous that I should; but I hate you as a man more worthy of loving you had you chosen it. Of all the sentiments with which my heart was penetrated for you, there only remain the admiration which cannot be refused to your fine genius, and a love for your writings. If I can honour

[1] This has reference to his own lifetime and mine, and surely the most precise rules of procedure, especially with a man who tramples all such considerations underfoot, could not exact more. — R.

nothing in you except your talents, the fault is not mine. I shall never be wanting in the respect due to them, nor in that which this respect requires. Adieu, Monsieur.' [1]

In the midst of these little literary squabbles which still fortified my resolution, I received the greatest honours letters ever acquired me, and of which I was the most sensible, in the two visits that Monsieur le Prince de Conti deigned to make to me, one at the Petit Château and the other at Mont-Louis. He even chose the time for both of these when Madame de Luxembourg was not at Montmorency, in order to render it more manifest that he came there solely on my account. I have never had a doubt of my owing the first condescensions of this Prince to Madame de Luxembourg and Madame de Boufflers; but I am yet of opinion that I owe to his own sentiments and to myself those with which he has since that time continually honoured me.[2]

My apartments at Mont-Louis being small, and the situation of the donjon charming, I conducted the Prince to it, where, to complete the condescension he was pleased to show me, he chose that I should have the honour of playing with him a game at chess. I knew that he beat the Chevalier de Lorenzi, who played better than I did. However, notwithstanding the signs and grimaces of the Chevalier and the spectators, which I feigned not to see, I won the two games that we played. When they were ended, I said to him in a respectful but grave manner:

[1] It will be observed that after this letter was written, nearly seven years elapsed before I mentioned or showed it to a living soul. The case was similar respecting the two letters that Monsieur Hume forced me to write to him last summer, until he made that clamour of which all are aware. The ill that I am obliged to communicate to my enemies I utter secretly to themselves; as for the good, when there is any, I proclaim it publicly and frankly. — R.

[2] Remark the perseverance of this blind and stupid confidence in the midst of all the treatment which should soonest have undeceived me. It continued until my return to Paris in 1770. — R.

'Monseigneur, I honour your Serene Highness too much not to beat you always at chess.' This great prince, who had real wit, sense, and knowledge, and so was worthy not to be treated with mean adulation, felt in fact, at least I think so, that I was the only person present who treated him like a man, and I have every reason to believe that he was pleased with me for it.

Had this even not been the case, I should not have reproached myself with having been unwilling to deceive him in anything, and I certainly cannot do it with having in my heart made an ill return for his goodness, but solely with having sometimes done it with an ill grace, whilst he himself accompanied with infinite gracefulness the manner in which he showed me the signs of it. A few days afterwards he ordered a hamper of game to be sent to me, which I received as I ought. This in a little time was succeeded by another, and one of his gamekeepers wrote me, by order of his Highness, that the game it contained had been shot by the Prince himself. I received this second hamper, but I wrote to Madame de Boufflers that I would not receive a third. This letter was generally blamed, and deservedly so. Refusing to accept presents of game from a Prince of the blood, who, moreover, sends it in so polite a manner, is less the delicacy of a haughty man, who wishes to preserve his independence, than the rusticity of a clown who does not know himself. I have never reperused this letter in my collection without blushing and reproaching myself for having written it. But I have not undertaken my *Confessions* with an intention of concealing my faults, and that of which I have just spoken is too shocking in my own eyes to suffer me to pass it over in silence.

If I were not guilty of the offence of becoming his rival, I was very near it; for Madame de Boufflers was still his mistress, and I knew nothing of the matter. She

came rather frequently to see me with the Chevalier de Lorenzi. She was yet young and beautiful, affected the old Roman tone, and my mind was always romantic, which was much of the same nature. I was near being enmeshed; I believe she perceived it; the Chevalier saw it also — at least he spoke to me upon the subject, and in a manner not discouraging. But I was now reasonable, and at the age of fifty it was time I should be so. Full of the doctrine I had just preached to greybeards in my letter to D'Alembert, I should have been ashamed of not profiting by it myself; besides, coming to the knowledge of that of which I had been ignorant, I must have been mad to have carried my pretensions so far as to expose myself to such an illustrious rivalry. Finally, ill cured perhaps of my passion for Madame d'Houdetot, I felt nothing could replace it in my heart, and I bade adieu to love for the rest of my life. At the time of writing, I have just experienced, from a young woman who had designs, very dangerous allurements, and glances from very disquieting eyes; but, if she feigned to forget my twelve lustres, I remember them. After having thus withdrawn myself from danger, I am no longer afraid of a fall, and I answer for myself for the rest of my days.

Madame de Boufflers, perceiving the emotion she caused in me, might also observe that I had triumphed over it. I am neither mad nor vain enough to believe that at my age I was capable of inspiring her with the same feelings; but, from certain words which she let drop to Thérèse, I thought I had inspired her with a little curiosity. If this be the case, and that she has not forgiven me the disappointment she met with, it must be confessed that I was indeed born to be the victim of my weakness, since triumphant love was so prejudicial to me, and conquered love not less so.

Here finishes the collection of letters which has served

me as a guide in the last two books. My steps will in future be directed by memory only; but this is of such a nature, relative to the cruel period to which I am now come, and the strong impression of objects has remained so perfectly upon my mind, that, lost in the immense sea of my misfortunes, I cannot forget the details of my first shipwreck, although the consequences present to me but a confused remembrance. I therefore shall be able to proceed in the succeeding book with sufficient confidence. If I go further, it will be but groping in the dark.

# BOOK XI

## [1761]

ALTHOUGH *Julie*, which for a long time had been in the press, did not yet, at the end of the year 1760, appear, the work already began to make a great noise. Madame de Luxembourg had spoken of it at Court, and Madame d'Houdetot at Paris. The latter had even obtained from me permission for Saint-Lambert to read the manuscript to the King of Poland, who had been delighted with it. Duclos, to whom I had also given the perusal of the work, had spoken of it at the Academy. All Paris was impatient to see the novel; the booksellers of the Rue Saint-Jacques and the Palais Royal were beset with people, who came to inquire when it was to be published. It was at length brought out, and its success answered, contrary to custom, to the impatience with which it had been expected.[1] Madame La Dauphine, who was one of the first who read it, spoke of it to Monsieur de Luxembourg as a ravishing performance. The opinions of men of letters differed from each other; but in those of every other class approbation was general, especially with the women, who became so intoxicated with the book and the author, that there were few, even in the higher ranks, over whom I might not have achieved an easy conquest had I attempted it. Of this I have such proofs as I will not commit to paper, and which, without the aid of experience, authorise my

[1] For some time after its appearance it was lent for reading at the rate of twelve sous an hour.

opinion. It is singular that the book should have succeeded better in France than in the rest of Europe, although the French, both men and women, are rather severely treated in it. Contrary to my expectation, it was least successful in Switzerland, and most so in Paris. Do friendship, love, and virtue, then, reign in Paris more than elsewhere? Certainly not; but there still reigns there that exquisite sensibility which transports the heart in presence of their image, and makes us cherish in others the pure, tender, and virtuous sentiments we no longer possess. Corruption is everywhere the same; virtue and morality no longer exist in Europe; but, if the least love of them still remains, it is in Paris that this will be found.[1]

In the midst of so many prejudices and feigned passions, the real sentiments of nature are not to be distinguished from others, unless we well know how to analyse the human heart. A very nice discrimination, not to be acquired except by the education of cultivated society, is necessary to feel the finesses of the heart, if I dare use the expression, with which this work abounds. I do not hesitate to place the fourth part of it upon an equality with *La Princesse de Clèves;* nor to assert that had these two pieces been read nowhere but in the provinces, their full merit would never have been discovered. It must not, therefore, be considered as a matter of astonishment that the greatest success of my work was at Court. It abounds with lively but veiled touches of the pencil, which could not but give pleasure there, because the persons who frequent it are more accustomed than others to discern them. A distinction must, however, be made. The work is by no means proper for the species of men of wit who have nothing but cunning, who possess no other kind of discernment than that which penetrates

[1] I wrote this in 1769. — R.

evil, and see nothing where good only is to be found. If, for instance, *Julie* had been published in a certain country that I call to mind, I am convinced that it would not have been read through by a single person, and the work would have been stifled in its birth.

I have collected most of the letters written to me on the subject of this publication, and deposited them, tied up together, in the hands of Madame de Nadaillac.[1] Should this collection ever be given to the world, a very singular thing will be seen, and an opposition of opinion which shows what it is to have to do with the public. The thing least kept in view, and which will ever distinguish it from every other work, is the simplicity of the subject and the continuation of the interest, which, centred in three persons, is kept up throughout six volumes without episode, romantic adventure, or anything malicious either in the persons or actions. Diderot warmly complimented Richardson on the prodigious variety of his scenes and the multiplicity of his persons. Richardson has indeed the merit of having well characterised them all; but with respect to their number, he has that in common with the most insipid writers of novels, who attempt to make up for the sterility of their ideas by multiplying persons and adventures. It is easy to awaken the attention by incessantly presenting unheard-of events and new faces, which pass by like the figures in a magic lantern; but to sustain that attention to the same objects, and without the aid of the wonderful, is certainly more difficult; and if, everything else being equal, the simplicity of the subject add to the beauty of the work, the novels of Richardson, superior in so many other respects, cannot in this point be compared to mine. I know it is already dead, and the cause of its being so; but it will revive again.

[1] Abbess of Gomer-Fontaine, in the diocese of Rouen.

All my fear was, that by an extreme simplicity the narrative would be fatiguing, and that it was not sufficiently interesting to engage the attention to the end. I was relieved from this apprehension by a circumstance which alone was more flattering to me than all the compliments made me upon the work.

It appeared at the beginning of the Carnival; a colporteur carried it to Madame la Princesse de Talmont,[1] on the evening of a ball-night at the Opéra. After supper she dressed herself for the ball, and until the hour of going there took up the new novel. At midnight she ordered the horses to be put to the carriage, and continued to read. The servant returned to tell her the horses were put to; she made no answer. Her people, perceiving she forgot herself, came to tell her it was two o'clock. 'There is yet no hurry,' replied she, still reading on. Some time afterwards, her watch having stopped, she rang to know the hour. She was told it was four o'clock. 'That being the case,' she said, 'it is too late to go to the ball; let the horses be taken out.' She undressed herself and passed the rest of the night in reading.

Ever since I came to the knowledge of this circumstance, I have had a constant desire to see Madame de Talmont, not only to know from herself whether or not what I have related be exactly true, but because I have always thought it impossible to take so lively an interest in the *Héloïse*, without having that sixth and moral sense with which so few hearts are endowed, and without which no person whatever can understand mine.

What rendered the women so favourable to me was their being persuaded that I had written my own history, and was myself the hero of the romance. This

[1] It was not she, but some other lady, whose name I do not know; but of the fact itself I have been well assured. — R.

opinion was so firmly established, that Madame de Polignac wrote to Madame de Verdelin, begging that she would prevail upon me to show her the portrait of Julie. Everybody thought it was impossible so strongly to express sentiments without having felt them, or thus to describe the transports of love, unless immediately from the feelings of one's own heart. This was true, and I certainly wrote the novel during the time my imagination was inflamed to ecstasy; but they who thought real objects necessary to this effect were deceived, and were far from conceiving to what a degree my mind can be excited for imaginary beings. Without Madame d'Houdetot, and the recollection of a few circumstances in my youth, the amours I have felt and described would have been with fairy nymphs. I was unwilling either to confirm or destroy an error which was advantageous to me. The reader may see in the prefatory dialogue, which I had printed separately, in what manner I left the public in suspense. Rigorous people say I ought to have explicitly declared the truth. For my part I see nothing that could oblige me to it, and am of opinion that there would have been more folly than candour in the declaration made without necessity.

Much about the same time, *La Paix Perpétuelle* made its appearance. Of this I had the year before given the manuscript to a certain Monsieur de Bastide, the author of a journal called *Le Monde*, into which he would fain cram all my manuscripts. He was known to Monsieur Duclos, and came in his name to beg that I would help him to fill the *Monde*. He had heard speak of *Julie*, and would have me put this into his journal; he would have me put *Émile* there too; he would have also asked me for the *Contrat Social*, for the same purpose, had he suspected it to be written. At length, fatigued with his importunities, I resolved to let him have *La Paix Perpétuelle*,

which I gave him for twelve louis. Our agreement was, that he should print it in his journal; but as soon as he became the proprietor of the manuscript he thought proper to print it separately, with a few retrenchments which the censor exacted. What would have happened had I joined to the work my opinion of it, which fortunately I did not communicate to Monsieur de Bastide, nor was it comprehended in our agreement? This remains still in manuscript amongst my papers. If ever it be made public, the world will see how much the pleasantries and self-sufficient manner of Voltaire on the subject must have made me laugh — I, who was so well acquainted with the capacity of this poor man in political matters of which he took it into his head to speak.

In the midst of my success with the women and the public, I felt I was losing ground at the Hôtel de Luxembourg, not with Monsieur le Maréchal, whose goodness to me seemed daily to increase, but with Madame la Maréchale. Since I had had nothing more to read to her, the door of her apartment was not so frequently open to me, and during her stay at Montmorency, although I regularly presented myself, I seldom saw her except at table. My place even there was not distinctly marked out by her side as usual. As she no longer offered it to me, and spoke to me but seldom, not having on my part much to say to her, I was as well satisfied with another, where I was more at my ease, especially in the evening; for I mechanically contracted the habit of placing myself nearer and nearer to Monsieur le Maréchal.

In reference to the evening, I recollect having said that I did not sup at the château, and this was true, at the beginning of my acquaintance there; but as Monsieur de Luxembourg did not dine, nor even sit down to table, it happened that I had passed several months, and was already very familiar in the family, without ever

having eaten with him. This he had the goodness to remark, upon which I determined to sup there from time to time, when the company was not numerous. I did so, and found the suppers very agreeable, as the dinners were taken almost standing, whereas the former were long, everybody remaining seated with pleasure after a long walk; very good, because Monsieur de Luxembourg loved choice eating; and the honours of them were done in a charming manner by Madame la Maréchale. Without this explanation it would be difficult to understand the end of a letter from Monsieur de Luxembourg (C, No. 36), in which he says he recollects our walks with the greatest pleasure; 'especially,' adds he, 'when in the evening we entered the court and did not find there the traces of carriage-wheels.' The rake being every morning drawn over the gravel to efface the marks left by the coach-wheels, I judged by the number of ruts how many persons had arrived in the afternoon.

This year (1761) completed the heavy losses this good man had suffered since I had had the honour of being known to him; as if it had been ordained that the evils prepared for me by destiny should begin with the man to whom I was most attached, and who was the most worthy of esteem. The first year he lost his sister, Madame la Duchesse de Villeroy; the second, his daughter, Madame la Princesse de Robeck; the third, he lost in the Duc de Montmorency his only son, and in the Comte de Luxembourg his grandson, the two last supporters of the branch to which he belonged, and of his name. He bore all these losses with apparent courage, but his heart incessantly bled in secret during the rest of his life, and his health was ever after upon the decline. The unexpected and tragical death of his son must have afflicted him the more, as it happened immediately after the King had granted him for this son, and given him in

promise for his grandson, the reversion of the commission he himself held as captain of the Gardes du Corps. He had the mortification to see the last, a most promising young man, perish by degrees, from the blind confidence of the mother in the physician, who, giving the unhappy youth medicines for food, suffered him to die of inanition. Alas! had my advice been taken, the grandfather and the grandson would both still have been alive. What did not I say and write to Monsieur le Maréchal, what remonstrances did I not make to Madame de Montmorency, upon the more than severe regimen which upon the faith of a physician she made her son observe? Madame de Luxembourg, who thought as I did, would not usurp the authority of the mother; Monsieur de Luxembourg, a man of a mild and easy character, did not like to contradict her. Madame de Montmorency had in Bordeu a confidence to which her son at length became a victim. How delighted was the poor creature when he could obtain permission to come to Mont-Louis with Madame de Boufflers, to ask Thérèse for some victuals for his famished stomach! How did I secretly deplore the miseries of greatness in seeing this only heir to an immense fortune, a great name, and so many titles and dignities, devour with the greediness of a beggar a wretched morsel of bread! At length, notwithstanding all I could say and do, the physician triumphed, and the child died of hunger.

The same confidence in quacks which destroyed the grandson dug the grave of the grandfather, and to this he added the pusillanimity of wishing to dissimulate the infirmities of age. Monsieur de Luxembourg had at intervals a pain in the great toe, which deprived him of sleep, and brought on slight fever; he was seized with it at Montmorency. I had courage enough to pronounce the word 'gout'; Madame de Luxembourg gave me a

reprimand. The surgeon — valet de chambre of the Maréchal — maintained it was not the gout, and dressed the suffering part with *baume tranquille.* Unfortunately, the pain subsided, and when it returned the same remedy was had recourse to. The constitution of the Maréchal was weakened, and his sufferings increased, as did his remedies in the same proportion. Madame de Luxembourg, who at length perceived the disorder to be the gout, objected to the dangerous manner of treating it. Things were afterwards concealed from her, and Monsieur de Luxembourg in a few years lost his life in consequence of his obstinate adherence to what he imagined to be a method of cure. But let me not anticipate distant misfortunes: how many others have I to relate before I come to this!

It is singular with what fatality everything I could say and do seemed of a nature to displease Madame de Luxembourg, even when I had it most at heart to preserve her friendship. The repeated afflictions which fell upon Monsieur de Luxembourg only attached me to him the more, and consequently to Madame de Luxembourg; for they always seemed to me to be so sincerely united that the sentiments in favour of the one necessarily extended to the other. Monsieur le Maréchal grew old. His assiduity at court, the cares this brought on, continual hunting, fatigue, and especially that of the service during the quarter he was in waiting, required the vigour of a young man, and I did not perceive anything that could support his in that course of life: since, besides, after his death, his dignities would be dispersed and his name become extinct, it was by no means necessary for him to continue a laborious life, of which the principal object had been to dispose the Prince favourably to his children. One day, when we three were together, and he complained of the fatigues of the court, as

a man who had been discouraged by his losses, I took the liberty to speak of retirement, and to give him the advice Cineas gave to Pyrrhus. He sighed, and returned no positive answer. But the moment Madame de Luxembourg found me alone she reprimanded me severely for my counsel, at which she seemed to be alarmed. She made a remark of which I so strongly felt the justness that I determined never again to touch upon the same chord: this was, that the long habit of living at court made that life necessary; that it was become even a matter of amusement for Monsieur de Luxembourg; and that the retirement I proposed to him would be less a relaxation from care than an exile, in which inactivity, weariness, and melancholy would soon put an end to his existence. Although she must have perceived that I was convinced, and ought to have relied upon the promise I made her, and which I faithfully kept, her mind never seemed easy on the subject; and I recollect that the conversations I afterwards had with Monsieur le Maréchal were less frequent, and almost always interrupted.

Whilst my stupidity and awkwardness injured me in her opinion, persons whom she frequently saw and most loved were far from being disposed to aid me in regaining it. The Abbé de Boufflers especially, a young man as brilliant as it was possible for a man to be, never seemed well disposed towards me; and, besides his being the only person of the society of Madame la Maréchale who never showed me the least attention, I thought I perceived that I lost something with her every time he came to the château. It is true that, without his wishing this to be the case, his presence alone was sufficient to produce the effect, so much did his graceful and elegant manner render still more dull my stupid *spropositi*. During the two first years he seldom came to Montmorency, and by the indulgence of Madame la Maréchale I had

held my own pretty well; but as soon as his visits began to be regular I was irretrievably lost. I could have wished to take refuge under his wing, and gain his friendship; but the same awkwardness which made it necessary that I should please him prevented me from succeeding in the attempt, and what I did clumsily with that intention entirely lost me with Madame la Maréchale, without being of the least service to me with the Abbé. With his understanding he might have succeeded in anything, but the impossibility of applying himself, and his turn for dissipation, prevented his acquiring a perfect knowledge of any subject. His talents are, however, various, and these sufficient for the circles in which he wishes to distinguish himself. He writes light poetry and fashionable letters, strums on the cithern, and pretends to draw with crayons. He took it into his head to attempt the portrait of Madame de Luxembourg — the sketch he produced was horrid. She said it did not in the least resemble her, and this was true. The traitorous Abbé consulted me, and I, like a fool and a liar, said there was a likeness. I wished to flatter the Abbé, but I did not please Madame la Maréchale, who noted down what I had said, and the Abbé, having obtained what he wanted, laughed at me in his turn. I perceived by the ill success of this my late beginning the necessity of never making another attempt to flatter *invita Minerva.*

My talent was that of telling men useful but severe truths with energy and courage; to this I ought to have confined myself. Not only was I not born to flatter, but I knew not how to commend. The awkwardness with which I have sought to bestow praise has done me more harm than the severity of my censures. Of this I have to adduce one terrible instance, the consequences of which have not only fixed my fate for the rest of my life, but will perhaps decide my reputation throughout all posterity.

During the residence of Monsieur de Luxembourg at Montmorency, Monsieur de Choiseul sometimes came to supper at the château. He arrived there one day after I had left it. My name was mentioned, and Monsieur de Luxembourg related to him what had happened at Venice between me and Monsieur de Montaigu. Monsieur de Choiseul said it was a pity that I had quitted that track, and if I chose to enter it again he would most willingly give me employment. Monsieur de Luxembourg told me what had passed. Of this I was the more sensible as I was not accustomed to be spoiled by ministers, and, had I been in a better state of health, it is not certain that I should not have been guilty of a new folly. Ambition never had power over my mind except during the short intervals in which every other passion left me at liberty; but one of these intervals would have been sufficient to determine me. This good intention of Monsieur de Choiseul gained him my attachment and increased the esteem which, in consequence of some operations in his administration, I had conceived for his talents; and the 'family compact' in particular had seemed to me to evince a statesman of the first order. He moreover gained ground in my estimation by the little respect I entertained for his predecessors, not even excepting Madame de Pompadour, whom I considered as a species of prime minister; and when it was reported that one of these two would expel the other, I thought I offered up prayers for the honour of France when I desired that Monsieur de Choiseul might triumph. I had always felt an antipathy to Madame de Pompadour, even before her preferment; I had seen her with Madame de La Poplinière, when her name was still Madame d'Étioles. I was afterwards dissatisfied with her silence on the subject of Diderot, and with her proceedings relative to myself, as well on the subject of *Les Fêtes de Ramire* and *Les Muses Galantes*

as on that of *Le Devin du Village*, which had not in any manner produced me advantages proportioned to their success; and on all occasions I had found her but little disposed to serve me. This, however, did not prevent the Chevalier de Lorenzi from proposing to me to write something in praise of that lady, insinuating that I might acquire some advantage by it. The proposition excited my indignation, the more as I perceived that it did not come from himself, knowing that, passive as he was, he thought and acted only according to the impulsion of others. I am so little accustomed to constraint that it was impossible for me to conceal from him my disdain, nor from anybody the moderate opinion I had of the favourite; this I am sure she knew, and thus my own interest was added to my natural inclination in the wishes I formed for Monsieur de Choiseul. Having a great esteem for his talents, on which all my knowledge of him was grounded, full of gratitude for his kind intentions, and moreover unacquainted in my retirement with his tastes and manner of living, I already considered him as the avenger of the public and myself; and as I was then giving the concluding touches to *Le Contrat Social*, I stated therein, in a single passage, what I thought of preceding ministers, and of him by whom they began to be eclipsed. On this occasion I acted contrary to my most constant maxim; and, besides, I did not recollect that, in bestowing emphatic praise and blame in the same article, without naming the persons, the language must be so appropriated to those to whom it is applicable that the most sensitive self-love cannot find in it anything equivocal. I was in this respect in such an imprudent security that I never once thought it was possible that any one should make a false application. It will soon appear whether I was right.

One of my misfortunes was always to be connected

with some female author. This I thought I might at least avoid amongst the great. I was deceived; it still pursued me. Madame de Luxembourg was not, however — at least that I know of — attacked with the mania of writing; but Madame la Comtesse de Boufflers was. She wrote a tragedy in prose, which, in the first place, was read, handed about, and highly spoken of in the society of Monsieur le Prince de Conti, and upon which, not satisfied with the encomiums she had received, she would absolutely consult me for the purpose of having mine. This she obtained, but with that moderation which the work deserved. She, besides, had with it the information that I thought it my duty to give her, that her piece, entitled *L'Esclave Généreux*, greatly resembled an English piece, little known, though translated, entitled *Oroonoko*. Madame de Boufflers thanked me for the remark, but, however, assured me there was not the least resemblance between her piece and the other. I never spoke of the plagiarism except to herself, and I did it to discharge a duty she had imposed on me; but this has not since prevented me from frequently recollecting the consequences of the sincerity of Gil Blas to the preaching archbishop.

Besides the Abbé de Boufflers, by whom I was not beloved, and Madame de Boufflers, in whose opinion I was guilty of wrongs which neither women nor authors ever pardon, the other friends of Madame la Maréchale never seemed much disposed to become mine, among others Monsieur le Président Hénault, who, enrolled amongst authors, was not exempt from their weaknesses; also Madame du Deffand and Mademoiselle de Lespinasse, both warmly attached to Voltaire, and the intimate friends of D'Alembert, with whom the latter at length lived — however, upon an honourable footing, for it cannot be understood I mean otherwise. I first began

to interest myself for Madame du Deffand, whom the loss of her eyes made an object of commiseration in mine, but her manner of living, so contrary to my own that her hour of going to bed was almost mine for rising, her unbounded passion for trifling wit, the importance she gave to every kind of printed trash, either complimentary or abusive, the despotism and transports of her oracles, her excessive admiration or dislike of everything, which did not permit her to speak upon any subject without convulsions, her inconceivable prejudices, invincible obstinacy, and the mad enthusiasm to which all this carried her in her passionate judgments, speedily disgusted me, and diminished the attention I wished to pay her. I neglected her, and she perceived it; this was enough to set her in a rage; and, although I was sufficiently aware how much a woman of her character was to be feared, I preferred exposing myself to the scourge of her hatred rather than to that of her friendship.

My having so few friends in the society of Madame de Luxembourg would not have been dangerous had I had no enemies in her family. Of these I had only one, but one who, by the situation in which I am at this hour, is equal to a hundred. It certainly was not Monsieur de Villeroy, her brother, for he not only came to see me, but had several times invited me to Villeroy; and, as I had answered to the invitation with all possible politeness and respect, he had taken my vague reply as a consent, and arranged with Monsieur and Madame de Luxembourg a journey of a fortnight, in which it was proposed to me to make one of the party. As the cares my health then required did not permit me to go from home without risk, I prayed Monsieur de Luxembourg to have the goodness to release me. His answer (D, No. 3) proves that this was done with all possible ease, and Monsieur le Duc de Villeroy still continued to show me his usual marks of

goodness. His nephew and heir, the young Marquis de Villeroy, had not for me the same benevolence, nor had I for him the respect I had for his uncle. His hare-brained manner rendered him insupportable to me, and my coldness drew upon me his aversion. He insultingly attacked me one evening at table, and I had the worst of it, because I am a fool, without presence of mind, and because anger, instead of sharpening what little wit I have, deprives me of it altogether. I had a dog which had been given to me when he was quite young, soon after my arrival at the Hermitage, and which I had called Duke. This dog, not handsome, but rare of his kind, of which I had made my companion and friend — a title that he certainly merited much more than most of the persons by whom it was taken — became celebrated at the Château de Montmorency for his good-nature and fondness, and the attachment we had to each other; but from a foolish pusillanimity I had changed his name to Turk, as if there were not numberless dogs called Marquis without any marquis whatsoever taking offence. The Marquis de Villeroy, who knew of this change of name, attacked me about it in such a manner that I was obliged openly at table to relate what I had done. Whatever there might be offensive in the name of Duke, it was not in my having given it, but in my having taken it away. The worst of all was, there were many dukes present — amongst others, Monsieur de Luxembourg and his son — and the Marquis de Villeroy, who was one day to have, and now has, the title, enjoyed in the most cruel manner the embarrassment into which he had thrown me and the effect it had produced. I was told the next day that his aunt had severely reprimanded him, and it may be judged whether, supposing her to have been serious, this put me upon better terms with him.

To enable me to support this enmity I had no person,

either at the Hôtel de Luxembourg or at the Temple, except the Chevalier de Lorenzi, who professed himself my friend, but he was more that of D'Alembert, under whose protection he passed with women for a great geometrician. He was, moreover, the *sigisbé*, or rather the complaisant creature, of Madame la Comtesse de Boufflers, herself very friendly with D'Alembert; and the Chevalier de Lorenzi existed and thought only through her. Thus, far from having from without any counterbalance to my inability to keep myself in the good graces of Madame de Luxembourg, everybody who approached her seemed to concur in injuring me in her opinion. Yet, besides the *Émile* with which she charged herself, she gave me at the same time another mark of her interest and benevolence, which made me imagine that, even although weary of me, she would still preserve for me the friendship she had so many times promised me for life.

As soon as I thought I could depend upon this I had begun to ease my heart by confessing to her all my faults, having made it an inviolable maxim to show myself to my friends such as I really was, neither better nor worse. I had declared to her my connection with Thérèse, and everything that had resulted from it, without concealing the manner in which I had disposed of my children. She had received my confessions favourably, and even too much so, since she spared me the censures I so much merited; and what made the greatest impression upon me was her goodness to Thérèse, making her little presents, sending for her, and begging her to come and see her, receiving her with caresses, and often embracing her in public. This poor girl was in transports of joy and gratitude of which I certainly partook. The friendship which Monsieur and Madame de Luxembourg showed me in their treatment of Thérèse affected me much more than that shown immediately to myself.

Things remained in this state for a considerable time, but at length Madame la Maréchale carried her goodness so far as to have a desire to take one of my children from the hospital. She knew I had caused a cipher to be put into the swaddling-clothes of the eldest. She asked me for the counterpart of the cipher, and I gave it her. In this research she employed La Roche, her valet de chambre and confidential servant, who made vain inquiries and discovered nothing, though at the end of only twelve or fourteen years, had the registers of the Enfants-Trouvés been in order, or the search properly made, the original cipher ought to have been found. However this may be, I was less sorry for his want of success than I should have been had I continued to have knowledge of the child from its birth until that moment. If by the aid of the indications given some child had been presented as my own, the doubt of its being so in fact, and the fear of having one thus substituted for another, would have contracted my affections, and I should not have tasted in all its charm of the real sentiment of nature. This, at least during infancy, stands in need of being supported by habit. The long absence of a child whom one has not really known weakens and at length annihilates paternal and maternal sentiment, and parents will never love a child sent to nurse like one which is brought up under their eyes. This reflection may extenuate my faults in their effects, but it must aggravate them in their source.

It may not perhaps be useless to remark that by means of Thérèse this same La Roche became acquainted with Madame Le Vasseur, whom Grimm still kept at Deuil near La Chevrette, and not far from Montmorency. After my departure it was by means of Monsieur La Roche that I continued to send this woman the money that I have constantly sent her at stated times, and I am of opinion that he often carried her presents from Ma-

dame la Maréchale; therefore she certainly was not to be pitied, although she constantly complained. With respect to Grimm, as I am not fond of speaking of persons whom I ought to hate, I never mentioned his name to Madame de Luxembourg except when I could not avoid it, but she frequently made him the subject of conversation, without telling me what she thought of the man, or letting me discover whether or not he was of her acquaintance. Reserve with people I love, and who are open with me, being contrary to my nature, especially in things relating to themselves, I have since that time frequently thought of that just referred to, but never except when other events rendered the recollection natural.

Having waited a long time without hearing of *Émile*, after I had given it to Madame de Luxembourg, I at last learned that the agreement was made at Paris with the bookseller Duchesne, and by him with Néaulme, of Amsterdam. Madame de Luxembourg sent me the original and the duplicate of my agreement with Duchesne, that I might sign them. I discovered the writing to be by the same hand as that of the letters of Monsieur de Malesherbes, which he himself did not write. The certainty that my agreement was made by the consent and under the eye of that magistrate made me sign without hesitation. Duchesne gave me for this manuscript six thousand francs, half in specie, and, I think, one or two hundred copies. After having signed the two parts, I sent them both to Madame de Luxembourg, according to her desire. She gave one to Duchesne, and instead of returning the other kept it herself, so that I never saw it afterwards.

My acquaintance with Monsieur and Madame de Luxembourg, though it diverted me a little from my plan of retirement, did not make me renounce it. Even at

the time when I was most in favour with Madame la Maréchale, I always felt that nothing but my sincere attachment to Monsieur le Maréchal and herself could render supportable to me the people by whom they were surrounded; and all the difficulty I had was in conciliating this attachment with a manner of life more agreeable to my inclination and less contrary to my health, which constraint and late suppers continually deranged, notwithstanding all the care taken to prevent it, for in this, as in everything else, attention was carried as far as possible. Thus, for instance, every evening after supper the Maréchal, who went early to bed, never failed, notwithstanding everything that could be said to the contrary, to make me withdraw at the same time. | It was not until some little time before my catastrophe that, for what reason I know not, he ceased to pay me that attention.

Even before I perceived the coolness of Madame de Luxembourg I was desirous, that I might not expose myself to it, to execute my old project; but not having the means to that effect, I was obliged to wait for the conclusion of my agreement for *Émile*, and in the interval I finished the *Contrat Social*, and sent it to Rey, fixing the price of the manuscript at a thousand francs, which he paid me. I ought not perhaps to omit a trifling circumstance relative to this manuscript. I gave it, well sealed up, to Duvoisin, a minister in the Pays de Vaud, and chaplain at the Hôtel de Hollande, who sometimes came to see me, and took upon himself to send the packet to Rey, with whom he was in communication. The manuscript, written in a fine hand, was very small in size, and did not fill his pocket. Yet, in passing the barrière, the packet fell — I know not by what means — into the hands of the officers, who opened and examined it, and afterwards returned it to him, when he had reclaimed it in the name of the Ambassador. This gave

him an opportunity of reading it himself, which he ingenuously wrote me he had done, speaking highly of the work, without a word of criticism or censure, undoubtedly reserving to himself to become the avenger of Christendom as soon as the work should appear. He resealed the packet, and sent it to Rey. Such is the substance of his narrative in the letter in which he gave an account of the affair, and is all I ever knew of the matter.

Besides these two books and my *Dictionnaire de Musique*, at which I still did something as opportunity offered, I had other works of less importance ready to make their appearance, and which I proposed to publish either separately or in my general collection, should I ever undertake it. The most important of these works, most of which are still in manuscript in the hands of Du Peyrou, was an *Essai sur l'Origine des Langues*, which I had read to Monsieur de Malesherbes and the Chevalier de Lorenzi, who spoke favourably of it. I expected that all these productions together would produce me a net capital of from eight to ten thousand francs, which I intended to sink in annuities for my life and that of Thérèse, after which our design, as I have already mentioned, was to go and live together in the midst of some province, without further troubling the public about me, or myself with any other project than that of peacefully ending my days, and still continuing to do in my neigh bourhood all the good in my power, and to write at leisure the memoirs which I meditated.

Such was my intention, and the execution of it was facilitated by an act of generosity on the part of Rey, upon which I cannot be silent. This bookseller, of whom so many unfavourable things were told me in Paris, is, notwithstanding, the only one with whom I have always had reason to be satisfied.[1] It is true we frequently dis-

[1] When writing this, I was yet far from the imagination, the conception,

agreed as to the execution of my works; he was heedless and I was choleric; but in matters of interest which related to them, although I never made with him an agreement in form, I always found in him great exactness and probity. He is also the only person of his profession who frankly confessed to me that he gained largely by my means, and he frequently, when he offered me a part of his fortune, told me I was the author of it all. Not finding the means of showing his gratitude immediately to myself, he wished at least to give me proofs of it in the person of my *gouvernante*, upon whom he settled an annuity of three hundred francs, expressing in the deed that it was an acknowledgment for the advantages I had procured him. This he did between himself and me, without ostentation, pretension, or noise; and had not I spoken of it to everybody, not a single person would ever have known anything of it. I was so pleased with this action that I have since become attached to Rey, and conceived for him a real friendship. Some time afterwards he desired that I would become godfather to one of his children. I consented, and a part of my regret in the situation to which I am reduced is my being deprived of the means of rendering in future my attachment to my goddaughter useful to her and her parents. Why am I, so sensible of the modest generosity of this bookseller, so little sensible of the noisy eagerness of many persons of high rank, who pompously fill the world with accounts of the services they say they wished to render me, but the good effects of which I never felt? Is it their fault or mine? Are not they merely vain? Am not I merely ungrateful? Intelligent reader, weigh and determine; for my part, I say no more.

This pension was a great resource to Thérèse, and a con-

and the belief of the frauds that I have discovered in the printed copies of my writings — frauds that he has been forced to confess. — R.

siderable alleviation to me, although I was far from receiving from it a direct advantage, any more than from all the presents that were made her. She herself has always disposed of everything. When I kept her money I gave her a faithful account of it, without ever applying a *liard* to our common expenses, not even when she was richer than myself. 'What is mine is ours,' said I to her, 'and what is thine is thine.' I never departed from this maxim, which I often repeated to her. They who have had the baseness to accuse me of receiving through her hands that which I refused to take with mine, undoubtedly judged of my heart by their own, and knew but little of me. I would willingly eat with her the bread she should have earned, but never that she should have had given her. For a proof of this I appeal to herself, both now and hereafter, when, according to the course of nature, she shall have survived me. Unfortunately, she understands but little of economy in any respect, and is besides careless and extravagant, not from vanity nor gluttony, but solely from negligence. No creature is perfect here below, and since her excellent qualities must be balanced with some defects, I prefer these to vices, although her defects are perhaps more prejudicial to us both. The efforts I have made, as formerly I did for Mamma, to accumulate something in advance which might some day be to her a never-failing resource, are not to be conceived, but my cares were always ineffectual. Neither of these women ever called herself to an account, and, notwithstanding all my efforts, everything I acquired was dissipated as fast as it came. Notwithstanding the great simplicity of Thérèse's dress, the pension from Rey has never been sufficient to buy her clothes, and I have every year had to supplement it for that purpose. We are neither of us born to be rich, and this I certainly do not reckon amongst our misfortunes.

*Le Contrat Social* was soon printed. This was not the case with *Émile*, for the publication of which I waited to go into the retirement I meditated. Duchesne, from time to time, sent me specimens of type and paper to choose from; when I had made my choice, instead of beginning to print he sent me others. When at length we were fully determined on the size and letter, and several sheets were already printed off, on my making some trifling alteration in a proof he began the whole again, and at the end of six months we were less forward than on the first day. During all these experiments, I clearly perceived the work was being printed in France as well as in Holland, and that two editions of it were preparing at the same time. What could I do? The manuscript was no longer mine. Far from having had anything to do with the edition in France, I was always against it; but since at length this was preparing in spite of all opposition, and was to serve as a model to the other, it was necessary that I should cast my eyes over it, and examine the proofs, that my work might not be mutilated and disfigured. It was, besides, printed so much by the consent of the magistrate, that it was he who, in some measure, directed the undertaking; he likewise wrote to me frequently, and once came to see me and converse on the subject upon an occasion of which I am going to speak.

Whilst Duchesne crept like a tortoise, Néaulme, whom he withheld, scarcely moved at all. The sheets were not regularly sent him as they were printed. He thought there was some dishonesty in the manœuvre of Duchesne — that is, of Guy, who acted for him, — and, perceiving the terms of the agreement to be departed from, he wrote me letter after letter full of complaints, and it was less possible for me to find a remedy for them than for those I myself had to make. His friend Guérin, who at that time came frequently to see me, never ceased speaking to

me about the work, but always with great reserve. He knew and he did not know that it was being printed in France, and that the magistrate had a hand in it. In expressing his concern for the embarrassment the book was likely to occasion me, he seemed to accuse me of imprudence without ever saying in what this consisted: he incessantly equivocated, and seemed to speak for no other purpose than to hear what I had to say. I thought myself so secure that I laughed at his mystery and circumspection as at a habit he had contracted with ministers and magistrates, whose offices he much frequented. Certain of having conformed to every rule with the work, and strongly persuaded that I had not only the consent and protection of the magistrate, but that the book merited, and had obtained, the favour of the ministry, I congratulated myself upon my courage in doing good, and laughed at my pusillanimous friends who seemed uneasy on my account. Duclos was one of these, and I confess my confidence in his understanding and uprightness might have alarmed me by his example, had I had less confidence in the utility of the work, and in the probity of its patrons. He came from the house of Monsieur Baille to see me whilst *Émile* was in the press; he spoke to me concerning it; I read to him the *Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar*, to which he listened attentively and, as it seemed to me, with pleasure. When I had finished, he said, 'What, citizen! this is a part of a work now printing at Paris?' 'Yes,' answered I, 'and it ought to be printed at the Louvre by order of the King.' 'I confess it,' replied he; 'but pray do not mention to anybody your having read to me this fragment.' This striking manner of expressing himself surprised without alarming me. I knew Duclos was intimate with Monsieur de Malesherbes, and I could not conceive how it was possible he should think so differently from him upon the same subject.

I had lived at Montmorency for more than four years without ever having had there one day of good health. Although the air is excellent, the water is bad, and this may possibly be one of the causes which contributed to increase my habitual complaints. Towards the end of the autumn of 1761 I fell quite ill, and passed the whole winter in suffering almost without intermission. The physical ill, augmented by a thousand inquietudes, rendered these, too, more acute. For some time past my mind had been disturbed by melancholy forebodings, without my knowing to what these directly tended. I received anonymous letters of an extraordinary nature, and others, that were signed, much of the same import. I received one from a counsellor of the Parliament of Paris, who, dissatisfied with the present constitution of things, and foreseeing nothing but disagreeable events, consulted me upon the choice of an asylum at Geneva, or in Switzerland, to retire to with his family. Another was brought me from Monsieur de ——, Président à mortier of the Parliament of ——, who proposed to me to draw up for this Parliament, which was then at variance with the Court, memoirs and remonstrances, and offering to furnish me with all the documents and materials necessary to that purpose. When I suffer I am subject to ill-humour. This was the case when I received these letters, and I displayed ill-humour in my answers to them, flatly refusing everything that was asked of me. I do not, however, reproach myself with this refusal, as the letters might be so many snares laid by my enemies, [1] and what was required of me was contrary to the principles from which I was less willing than ever to swerve. But having it in my power to refuse with politeness, I did it with rudeness, and in this consists my error.

[1] I knew, for instance, the Président de —— to be connected with the Encyclopædists and the Holbachians. — R.

The two letters of which I have just spoken will be found amongst my papers. The letter from the counsellor did not absolutely surprise me, because I agreed with him in opinion, and with many others, that the declining constitution of France threatened an approaching downfall. The disasters of an unsuccessful war,[1] all of which proceeded from a fault in the government; the incredible confusion in the finances; the perpetual agitations and perplexities rife in the Administration, which was then divided between two or three ministers, amongst whom reigned nothing but discord, and who, for the sake of injuring each other, let the kingdom go to ruin; the discontent of the people, and of every other rank of subjects; the obstinacy of a woman who, constantly sacrificing her judgment, if she indeed possessed any, to her inclinations, kept from public employments the most capable persons to make room for such as pleased her best; everything concurred in justifying the foresight of the counsellor, that of the public, and my own. This made me several times consider whether or not I myself should seek an asylum out of the kingdom before it was torn by the dissensions by which it seemed to be threatened; but, relieved from my fears by my insignificance, and the peacefulness of my disposition, I thought that in the state of solitude in which I was determined to live no public commotion could reach me. I was sorry only that, in this state of things, Monsieur de Luxembourg should accept commissions which tended to turn public opinion against him in his government. I could have wished he had prepared himself a retreat, in case the great machine had fallen in pieces, which at the time seemed much to be apprehended; and it still appears to me beyond a doubt that if the reins of the government had not at last fallen into a single

[1] The Seven Years War.

hand,[1] the French monarchy would now be at the last gasp.

Whilst my situation became worse, the printing of *Émile* went on more slowly, and was at length suspended without my being able to learn the reason why; Guy did not deign to answer my letter of inquiry, and I could obtain no information from any person of what was going forward, Monsieur de Malesherbes being then in the country. No misfortune ever gives me real trouble, provided I know in what it consists; but it is my nature to be afraid of darkness; I hate and tremble at the appearance of it; mystery always gives me inquietude — it is too opposite to my natural disposition, in which there is an openness bordering on imprudence. The sight of the most hideous monster would, I am of opinion, alarm me but little; but if by night I were to see a figure in a white sheet, I should be afraid of it. My imagination, wrought upon by this long silence, was now employed in creating phantoms. I tormented myself the more in endeavouring to discover the impediment to the printing of my last and best production, as I had the publication of it much at heart; and as I always carried everything to an extreme, I imagined that I perceived in the suspension the suppression of the work. Yet, being unable to discover either the cause or manner of it, I remained in the most cruel state of suspense. I wrote letter after letter to Guy, to Monsieur de Malesherbes, and to Madame de Luxembourg, and not receiving answers, at least when I expected them, my head became so affected that I was not far from delirium. At the same time I unfortunately heard that Père Griffet, a Jesuit, had spoken of *Émile*, and repeated from it some passages. My imagination instantly unveiled to me the whole mystery of iniquity; I saw the whole progress of it as clearly as if it had been

[1] The Duc de Choiseul.

revealed to me. I figured to myself that the Jesuits, furious on account of the contemptuous manner in which I had spoken of their colleges, were in possession of my work; that it was they who hindered the publication; that, informed by their friend Guérin of my situation, and foreseeing my approaching dissolution, of which I myself had no manner of doubt, they wished to delay the appearance of the work until after that event, with an intention to mutilate and alter it, and in favour of their own views to attribute to me sentiments not my own. The number of facts and circumstances which occurred to my mind in confirmation of this silly supposition, and even gave it an appearance of truth supported by evidence and demonstration, is astonishing. I knew Guérin to be entirely in the interest of the Jesuits. I attributed to them all the friendly advances he had made me; I was persuaded that he had, by their entreaties, pressed me to engage with Néaulme; that the said Néaulme had given them the first sheets of my work; that they had afterwards found means to stop the printing of it by Duchesne, and perhaps to get possession of the manuscript in order to work upon it at their leisure, till my death should leave them free to publish it disguised in their own manner. I had always perceived, notwithstanding the wheedling of Père Berthier, that the Jesuits did not like me, not only as an Encyclopædist, but because all my principles were more in opposition to their maxims and influence than the incredulity of my colleagues, since atheistical and devout fanaticism, approaching each other by their common enmity to toleration, may become united, as they are in China, and as they are against myself; whereas religion, both reasonable and moral, taking away all human power over the conscience, deprives those who assume that power of every resource. I knew too that Monsieur le Chancelier was a great friend to

the Jesuits, and I had my fears lest the son, intimidated by the father, should find himself under the necessity of abandoning to them the work he had protected. I even imagined that I perceived this to be the case in the chicanery employed against me relative to the two first volumes, in which alterations were required for frivolous reasons; whilst the two other volumes were known to contain things of such a nature that, had the censor objected to them as he did to passages in the others, it would have required their being entirely written over again. I also understood, and Monsieur de Malesherbes himself told me of it, that the Abbé de Grave, whom he had charged with the inspection of this edition, was another partisan of the Jesuits. I saw nothing but Jesuits, without considering that, upon the eve of being suppressed, and wholly taken up in making their own defence, they had something which interested them much more than the cavillings relative to a work in which they were not in question. I am wrong, however, in saying this did not occur to me; for I really thought of it, and Monsieur de Malesherbes took care to make the observation to me the moment he heard of my extravagant suspicions. But, by another of those absurdities of a man who, from the bosom of obscurity, will absolutely judge of the secret of great affairs, with which he is totally unacquainted, I never could bring myself to believe that the Jesuits were in danger, and I considered the rumour to that effect as an artful manœuvre of their own to deceive their adversaries. Their past successes, which had been uninterrupted, gave me so terrible an idea of their power, that I already grieved at the degradation of the Parliament. I knew that Monsieur de Choiseul had prosecuted his studies under the Jesuits, that Madame de Pompadour was not upon bad terms with them, and that their league with favourites and minis-

ters had constantly appeared advantageous to both against their common enemies. The court seemed to remain neuter, and, persuaded as I was that should the society some day receive a severe check it could not come from the Parliament, I saw in the inaction of Government the ground of their confidence and the omen of their triumph. In fine, perceiving in the rumours of the day nothing more than dissimulation and snares on their part, and thinking that they, in their state of security, had time to watch over all their interests, I had not the least doubt of their shortly crushing Jansenism, the Parliament, and the Encyclopædists, with every other association which had not submitted to their yoke; and that, if they ever suffered my work to appear, this would not happen until it should be so transformed as to favour their pretensions, and thus make use of my name the better to deceive my readers.

I felt myself passing away, and such was the horror with which my mind was filled at the idea of dishonour to my memory in the work most worthy of myself, that I am surprised so many extravagant ideas did not occasion a speedy end to my existence. I never was so much afraid of death as at that time, and surely, had I died with the apprehensions I then had upon my mind, I should have died in despair. At present, when I perceive no obstacle to the execution of the blackest and most dreadful conspiracy ever formed against the memory of a man, I shall die much more peacefully, certain of leaving in my writings a testimony in my favour, and one which, sooner or later, will triumph over the calumnies of men.

[1762.] Monsieur de Malesherbes, who discovered the agitation of my mind, and to whom I acknowledged it, used such endeavours to restore me to tranquillity as

proved his unfailing goodness of heart. Madame de Luxembourg aided him in this good work, and several times went to Duchesne to know in what state the edition was. At length the impression was again begun, and the progress of it became more rapid without my ever knowing for what reason it had been suspended. Monsieur de Malesherbes took the trouble to come to Montmorency to calm my mind; in this he succeeded, and the full confidence I had in his uprightness having overcome the derangement of my poor head, gave efficacy to the endeavours he made to restore me. After what he had seen of my anguish and delirium, it was natural that he should think I was to be pitied, and he acted accordingly. The expressions, incessantly repeated, of the philosophical cabal by which he was surrounded occurred to his memory. When I went to live at the Hermitage, they, as I have already remarked, exclaimed that I should not remain there long. When they saw that I persevered, they charged me with obstinacy and pride, proceeding from a want of courage to retract, and insisted that my life there was a burden to me — in short, that I was very wretched. Monsieur de Malesherbes believed this really to be the case, and wrote to me upon the subject. This error in a man for whom I had so much esteem gave me some pain, and I wrote to him four letters successively, in which I stated the real motives of my conduct, and made him fully acquainted with my tastes, inclination, and character, and with the true sentiments of my heart. These four letters, written hastily, almost without taking pen from paper, and which I neither copied, corrected, nor even read, are perhaps the only things I ever wrote with facility, which in the midst of my sufferings and extreme depression was, I think, astonishing. I sighed, as I felt myself declining, at the thought of leaving in the minds of honest men an opinion

of me so far from true: and, by the sketch hastily given in my four letters, I endeavoured, in some measure, to substitute them for the memoirs that I had proposed to write. These letters, which pleased Monsieur de Malesherbes, and which he showed to many persons in Paris, are, besides, a kind of summary of what I here give in greater detail, and, on this account, merit preservation. The copy I begged of them some years afterwards will be found amongst my papers.

The only thing which continued to give me pain in the idea of my approaching dissolution was my not having any man of letters for a friend, to whom I could confide my papers, that after my death he might sort them with judgment. After my journey to Geneva I conceived a friendship for Moultou; this young man pleased me, and I could have wished him to close my dying eyes. I expressed to him this desire, and am of opinion that he would readily have complied with it had not his family and business prevented him from so doing. Deprived of this consolation, I still wished to give him a mark of my confidence by sending him the *Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar* before it was published. He was pleased with the work, but did not in his answer seem so fully to expect from it the effect of which I had but little doubt. He wished to receive from me some fragment which I had not given to anybody else. I sent him the funeral oration on the late Duke of Orleans. This I had written for the Abbé d'Arty, who had not pronounced it, because, contrary to his expectation, another person was appointed for that occasion.

The printing, after having been again taken in hand, was continued and completed without much difficulty; and I remarked this singularity, that after the correction so much insisted upon in the first two volumes, the two last were passed over without an objection, and

their contents did not delay the publication for a moment. I had still, however, some uneasiness which I must not pass over in silence. After having been afraid of the Jesuits, I began to fear the Jansenists and philosophers. An enemy to all that is known as party, faction, and cabal, I never heard the least good of persons concerned in them. The *commères* had quitted their old abode, and taken up their residence close by me, so that in their chamber everything said in mine and upon the terrace was distinctly heard, and from their garden it would have been easy to scale the low wall by which it was separated from my donjon. I had made this donjon my study, so that my table was covered with proofs and sheets of *Émile* and *Le Contrat Social*, and, stitching these sheets as they were sent to me, I had all my volumes a long time before they were published. My negligence, and the confidence I had in Monsieur Mathas, in whose garden I was shut up, frequently made me forget to lock the door at night, and in the morning I several times found it wide open. This, however, would not have given me the least inquietude had not my papers seemed to have been deranged. After having several times made the same remark, I became more careful, and locked the door. The lock was a bad one, and the key turned in it no more than half round. As I became more attentive I found my papers in a still greater confusion than they were when I left everything open. At length I missed one of my volumes for a day and two nights, without being able to tell what had become of it, until the morning of the third day, when I again found it upon the table. I never suspected either Monsieur Mathas or his nephew, Monsieur Dumoulin, knowing myself to be beloved by both, and my confidence in them was unbounded. That which I had in the *commères* began to diminish. Although they were Jansenists, I knew them to have some connec-

tion with D'Alembert, and, moreover, they all three lodged in the same house. This gave me some uneasiness, and put me more upon my guard. I removed my papers to my chamber, and dropped my acquaintance with these people, having learned besides that they had shown in several houses the first volume of *Émile*, which I had been imprudent enough to lend to them. Although they continued until my departure to be my neighbours, I had no further communication with them.

*Le Contrat Social* appeared a month or two before *Émile*. Rey, whom I had desired never secretly to introduce into France any of my books, applied to the magistrate for leave to send this book by Rouen, to which place he sent his package by sea. He received no answer, and his bales, after remaining at Rouen several months, were returned to him, but not until an attempt had been made to confiscate them. This probably would have been done had he not made a great clamour. Several persons, whose curiosity the work had excited, sent to Amsterdam for copies, which were circulated without being much noticed. Mauléon, who had heard of this, and had, I believe, seen the work, spoke to me on the subject with an air of mystery which surprised me, and would likewise have made me uneasy if, certain of having conformed to every rule, and having no cause to reproach myself, I had not by virtue of my grand maxim kept my mind calm. I moreover had no doubt that Monsieur de Choiseul, already well disposed towards me, and sensible of the eulogium which my esteem for him had induced me to make in the work, would support me in this affair against the malevolence of Madame de Pompadour.

I certainly had then as much reason as ever to count upon the goodness of Monsieur de Luxembourg, and even upon his assistance in case of need, for he never at

any time had given me more frequent or more pointed marks of his friendship. At his Easter visit, my melancholy state no longer permitting me to go to the château, he never suffered a day to pass without coming to see me, and at length, perceiving my sufferings to be incessant, he prevailed upon me to determine to see Frère Côme. He immediately sent for him, came with him, and had the courage, uncommon in a man of his rank, to remain with me during the operation, which was cruel and tedious. Morand had several times attempted it unsuccessfully; but Côme, whose skilful hand and lightness of touch were unequalled, after more than two hours — during which my sufferings were great, though I would not give expression to them, lest I should grieve the good Maréchal's tender heart — achieved his object. Upon the first examination Côme thought that he had found a great stone, and told me so; at the second he could not find it again. After having made two fresh attempts with so much care and circumspection that I thought the time long, he declared there was no stone, but that the prostate gland was scirrhous and considerably thickened. He found the bladder large and in good condition, and said that I had yet a great deal to suffer, and should live a long time. Should the second prediction be as fully accomplished as the first, my sufferings are far from being at an end.

It was thus that I learned, after having been so many years treated for disorders which I never had, that my disease, incurable without being mortal, would last as long as myself. My imagination, repressed by this information, no longer presented to me in perspective a cruel death in the agonies of the stone. Delivered from imaginary evils more cruel to me than those which were real, I more patiently suffered the latter. It is certain that I have suffered less from my disorder than I had

done before, and every time I recollect that I owe this alleviation to Monsieur de Luxembourg his memory becomes more dear to me.

Restored, as I may say, to life, and more than ever occupied with the plan according to which I was determined to pass the rest of my days, I only postponed its execution till the publication of *Émile*. I thought of Touraine, where I had already been, and which pleased me much, as well on account of the mildness of the climate as on that of the character of the inhabitants:

'La terra molle e lieta e dilettosa
Simili a se gli abitator produce.' [1]

I had already spoken of my project to Monsieur de Luxembourg, who endeavoured to dissuade me from it. I mentioned it to him a second time as a thing resolved upon. He then offered me the Château de Merlou, fifteen leagues from Paris, as an asylum which might be agreeable to me, and where both would have a real pleasure in seeing me settled. Their kindness touched me, and the proposition was not displeasing. But the first thing necessary was to see the place, and we agreed upon a day when Monsieur le Maréchal was to send his valet de chambre with a carriage to take me to it. On the day appointed I was much indisposed; the journey was necessarily postponed, and adverse circumstances prevented me from ever making it. I have since learned that the estate of Merlou did not belong to the Maréchal, but to his lady, on which account I was the less sorry that I had not gone to live there.

*Émile* was at length given to the public without my having heard further of retrenchments or difficulties.

[1] 'The land did like itself the people breed;
The soil is gentle, smooth, soft, delicate.'
*Fairfax's 'Tasso,'* i. 62.

Previous to the publication the Maréchal asked me for all the letters Monsieur de Malesherbes had written to me on the subject of the work. My great confidence in both, and the perfect security in which I felt myself, prevented me from reflecting upon the extraordinary, and even alarming, nature of this request. I returned all the letters except one or two which, from inattention, had been left between the leaves of a book. A little time before this Monsieur de Malesherbes told me he should withdraw the letters I had written to Duchesne during my alarm relative to the Jesuits, and it must be confessed that these letters did no great honour to my reason. But in my answer I assured him I would not in anything pass for being better than I was, and that he might leave the letters where they were. I know not what he did.

The publication of this work was not succeeded by the applause which had followed that of all my other writings. Never did a work obtain so much private praise; never did any obtain so little public approbation. What was said and written to me upon the subject by persons most capable of judging confirmed me in my opinion that it was the best as well as the most important of all the works I had produced. But everything favourable was said with an air of the strangest mystery, as if there had been a necessity for keeping this good opinion a secret. Madame de Boufflers, who wrote to me that the author of the work merited a statue and the homage of mankind, at the end of her letter desired it might be returned to her. D'Alembert, who in his note said that the work was decisive of superiority, and ought to place me at the head of all men of letters, did not sign what he wrote, although he had signed every note that I had before received from him. Duclos, a sure friend, a man of veracity, but circumspect, although he had a good opinion of the work, avoided mentioning it in his letters

to me. La Condamine fell upon the *Profession of Faith* and wandered from the subject. Clairaut confined himself to the same part, but he was not afraid of expressing to me the emotion which the reading of it had caused in him, and in the most direct terms wrote to me that it had warmed his old imagination. Of all those to whom I sent my book he was the only person who proclaimed openly and frankly in society his favourable opinion of it.

Mathas, to whom also I had given a copy before the publication, lent it to Monsieur de Blaire, counsellor in the Parliament and father of the Intendant at Strasbourg. Monsieur de Blaire had a country-house at Saint-Gratien, and Mathas, his old acquaintance, sometimes went to see him there when he was able. He made him read *Émile* before it was published. When he returned it to him, Monsieur de Blaire expressed himself in these very terms, which were repeated to me the same day: 'Monsieur Mathas, this is a very fine work, but of which more will be spoken ere long than might be wished for the author's sake.' I laughed at the prediction, and saw in it nothing more than the importance of a lawyer, who treats everything with an air of mystery. All the disquieting observations repeated to me made no impression upon my mind, and, far from foreseeing the coming catastrophe, certain of the utility and excellence of my work, and that I had in every respect conformed to established rules; convinced, as I thought I was, that I should be supported by all the credit of Madame de Luxembourg, and even by the favour of the ministry, I was satisfied with myself for the resolution I had taken to retire in the midst of my triumphs, and at the moment when I had wholly defeated those by whom I was envied.

One thing in the publication of the work alarmed me, less on account of my safety than for the acquittance

of my conscience. At the Hermitage and at Montmorency I had seen with indignation, and at my very door, the vexations which a jealous care for the pleasures of princes causes to be exercised upon wretched peasants, forced to suffer the havoc made by game in their fields, without daring to protect themselves save by making a noise, being forced to pass the night amongst the beans and peas with drums, kettles, and bells, to keep off the wild boars. As I had been a witness to the barbarous cruelty with which the Comte de Charolois treated these poor people, I had, towards the end of *Émile*, exclaimed against it. This was another infraction of my maxims, which has not remained unpunished. I was informed that the agents of Monsieur le Prince de Conti were but little less severe upon his estates. I trembled lest that Prince, for whom I was full of respect and gratitude, should take to his own account what shocked humanity had made me say on that of his uncle, and feel himself offended. Yet, as my conscience reassured me upon this article, I made myself easy, and by so doing acted wisely: at least I have never heard that this great Prince took notice of the passage, written long before I had the honour of being known to him.

A few days either before or after the publication of my work, for I do not exactly recollect the time, there appeared another work upon the same subject, taken verbatim from my first volume, except a few stupid things which were joined to the extract. This book bore the name of a Genevese, one Balexsert, and, according to the title-page, had gained the premium in the Academy of Haarlem. I easily imagined this Academy and this premium to be newly created, the better to conceal the plagiarism from the eyes of the public; but I further perceived that there was some prior intrigue which I could not unravel — either by the lending of my manu-

script, without which the theft could not have been committed, or for the purpose of forging the story of the pretended premium, to which it was necessary to give some foundation. It was not until several years afterwards that, by a word which escaped D'Ivernois, I penetrated the mystery, and discovered those by whom Sieur Balexsert had been brought forward.

The low murmurings which precede a storm began to be heard, and men of penetration clearly saw there was something hatching, relative to me and my book, which would shortly break forth. For my part, my stupidity was such that, far from foreseeing my misfortune, I did not even suspect the cause of it after I had felt its effect. It was artfully given out that, while the Jesuits were treated with severity, no indulgence could be shown to books, nor the authors of them, in which religion was attacked. I was reproached with having put my name to *Émile*, as if I had not put it to all my other works, of which nothing was said. Authority seemed to fear lest it should be obliged regretfully to take some steps which circumstances rendered necessary on account of my imprudence. Rumours to this effect reached my ears, and gave me little uneasiness: it never even came into my head that there could be the least thing in the whole affair which related to me personally, so perfectly irreproachable and well supported did I think myself; having besides conformed to every ministerial regulation, and not apprehending that Madame de Luxembourg would leave me in difficulties for an error which, if it existed, proceeded entirely from herself. But knowing the manner of proceeding in like cases, and that it was customary to punish booksellers while authors were favoured, I had some uneasiness on account of poor Duchesne, whom I saw exposed to danger, should Monsieur de Malesherbes abandon him.

My tranquillity still continued. Rumours increased, and soon changed their nature. The public, and especially the Parliament, seemed irritated by my composure. In a few days the fermentation became terrible, and the object of the menaces being changed, these were immediately addressed to me. The Parliamentarians were heard to declare that burning books was of no effect, the authors also should be burned with them; not a word was said of the booksellers. The first time these expressions, more worthy of an inquisitor of Goa than of a senator, were related to me, I had no doubt of their coming from the Holbachians with an intention to alarm me, and excite me to flight. I laughed at their puerile manœuvre, and said that they would, had they known the real state of things, have thought of some other means of inspiring me with fear; but the rumour at length became such that I perceived the matter was serious. Monsieur and Madame de Luxembourg had this year come to Montmorency in the beginning of June, which, for their second journey, was earlier than usual: I heard but little there of my new books, notwithstanding the noise they made in Paris; and the heads of the family said not a single word to me on the subject. However, one morning, when Monsieur de Luxembourg and I were together, he asked me if, in the *Contrat Social*, I had spoken ill of Monsieur de Choiseul. 'I!' said I, retreating a few steps with surprise; 'no; I swear to you I have not; but, on the contrary, I have made on him, and with a pen not given to praise, the finest eulogium a minister ever received.' I then showed him the passage.[1] 'And in *Émile?*' replied he. 'Not a word,' said I; 'there is not in it a single word which relates to him.' 'Ah!' said he, with more vivacity than was common to him, 'you should have taken the same care in the other book, or have

[1] *Le Contrat Social*, Book III. ch. vi.

expressed yourself more clearly.' 'I thought,' replied I, 'that I had so expressed myself; my esteem for him was such that I could not do otherwise.' He was again going to speak; I perceived him ready to open his mind: he stopped short and held his tongue. Wretched policy of a courtier, which, in the best of hearts, subjugates friendship itself!

This conversation, although short, explained to me my situation, at least in a certain way, and gave me to understand that it was against myself that enmity was directed. The unheard-of fatality which turned to my prejudice all the good I did and wrote afflicted my heart. Yet, feeling myself shielded in this affair by Madame de Luxembourg and Monsieur de Malesherbes, I did not perceive how my persecutors could deprive me of their protection; beyond this, I was convinced that equity and justice were thenceforth no longer in question, and that no trouble would be taken in examining whether I was culpable or no. The storm meanwhile became still more menacing. Néaulme himself expressed to me, in the excess of his babbling, how much he repented having had anything to do in the business, and his seeming certainty of the fate with which the book and the author were threatened. One thing, however, alleviated my fears: I saw Madame de Luxembourg so calm, satisfied, and cheerful, that I concluded she must necessarily be certain of the sufficiency of her credit, seeing that she did not seem to have the least apprehension on my account; that she said not a word to me either of consolation or apology; that she saw the turn the affair was taking with as much unconcern as if she had nothing to do with it or with anything else that related to me. What surprised me most was her complete silence. I thought she should have said something on the subject. Madame de Boufflers appeared less easy. She was agitated and

restless, busied herself a good deal, assuring me that Monsieur le Prince de Conti was taking great pains to ward off the blow about to be directed against my person, and which she attributed to the nature of present circumstances, in which it was of importance to the Parliament not to suffer themselves to be accused by the Jesuits of indifference to religion. She did not, however, seem to depend much either upon the success of her own efforts or even those of the Prince. Her conversations, more alarming than reassuring, all tended to persuade me to leave the kingdom and go to England, where she offered to find me many friends; amongst others, the celebrated Hume, who had long been hers. Seeing me still unshaken, she had recourse to other arguments more capable of disturbing my tranquillity. She intimated that, in case I was arrested and interrogated, I should be under the necessity of naming Madame de Luxembourg, and that her friendship for me required, on my part, such precautions as were necessary to prevent her being compromised. My answer was, that should what she apprehended come to pass, she need not be alarmed; that I should do nothing by which the lady might become a sufferer. She said that such a resolution was more easily taken than adhered to, and in this she was right, especially with respect to me, determined as I always have been neither to perjure myself nor lie before judges, whatever danger there might be in speaking the truth.

Perceiving this observation had made some impression upon my mind, without, however, inducing me to resolve upon flight, she spoke of the Bastille for a few weeks, as a means of placing me beyond the reach of the jurisdiction of the Parliament, which has nothing to do with prisoners of State. I had no objection to this singular favour, provided it were not solicited in my name. As she never spoke of it a second time, I after-

wards thought her proposition was made to sound me, and that the party did not think proper to have recourse to an expedient which would have put an end to everything.

A few days afterwards, Monsieur le Maréchal received from the curé of Deuil, the friend of Grimm and Madame d'Épinay, a letter informing him, as from good authority, that the Parliament was to proceed against me with the greatest severity, and that, on a day which he mentioned, an order was to be given to arrest me. I imagined that this was fabricated by the Holbachians. I knew the Parliament to be very attentive to forms, and that on this occasion, beginning by arresting me before it was juridically known whether I avowed myself the author of the book, was violating them all. I observed to Madame de Boufflers that none but persons accused of crimes which tend to endanger the public safety were, on a simple information, ordered to be arrested lest they should escape punishment; but when Government wish to punish a crime like mine, which merits honour and recompense, the proceedings are directed against the book, and the author is as much as possible left out of the question. Upon this she made some subtle distinction, which I have forgotten, to prove that ordering me to be arrested instead of summoning me to be heard was a matter of favour. The next day I received a letter from Guy, who informed me that, having in the morning been with the Procureur-général, he had seen in his office the rough draft of a requisition against *Émile* and the author. Guy, it is to be remembered, was the partner of Duchesne, who had printed the work, and, without apprehensions on his own account, charitably gave this information to the author. The credit I gave to him may be guessed. It was, no doubt, a very probable story that a bookseller, admitted to an audience by Monsieur le

Procureur-général, should read at ease scattered manuscripts and rough drafts in the office of that magistrate. Madame de Boufflers and others confirmed what he had said. By the absurdities which were incessantly rung in my ears, I was almost tempted to believe that everybody had lost his senses.

Clearly perceiving that there was some mystery, which no one thought proper to explain to me, I patiently awaited the event, depending upon my integrity and innocence, and thinking myself happy, let the persecution which awaited me be what it would, to be called to the honour of suffering in the cause of truth. Far from being afraid and concealing myself, I went every day to the château, and in the afternoon took my usual walk. On the 8th of June, the evening before the order was concluded on, I walked in company with two professors of the Oratory, Père Alamanni and Père Mandard. We carried to Les Champeaux a little collation, which we ate with a keen appetite. We had forgotten to bring glasses, and supplied the want of them by stalks of rye, through which we sucked up the wine from the bottle, piquing ourselves upon the choice of large tubes to vie with each other in pumping up what we drank. I never was more cheerful in my life.

I have related in what manner I lost my sleep during my youth. I had since that time contracted a habit of reading every night in my bed, until I found my eyes begin to grow heavy. I then extinguished my wax taper, and endeavoured to slumber for a few moments, which were in general very short. The book I commonly read at night was the Bible, which in this manner I read five or six times from the beginning to the end. This evening, finding myself less disposed to sleep than ordinary, I continued my reading beyond the usual hour, and read the whole book which finishes at the Levite of Ephraim —

the Book of Judges, if I mistake not, for since that time I have never once seen it. This history affected me exceedingly, and in a kind of dream my imagination still ran on it, when suddenly I was roused from my stupor by a noise and a light. Thérèse, carrying a candle, lighted Monsieur La Roche, who, perceiving me hastily raise myself up, said: 'Do not be alarmed; I come from Madame la Maréchale, who, in her letter, encloses you another from Monsieur le Prince de Conti.' In fact, in the letter of Madame de Luxembourg I found another, which an express from the Prince had brought her, stating that, notwithstanding all his efforts, it was determined to proceed against me with the utmost rigour. 'The fermentation,' said he, 'is extreme; nothing can ward off the blow; the Court requires it, and the Parliament will absolutely proceed; at seven o'clock in the morning an order will be made to arrest him, and persons will immediately be sent to execute it. I have obtained a promise that he shall not be pursued if he make his escape; but if he persists in exposing himself to be taken, this will immediately happen.' La Roche conjured me on behalf of Madame de Luxembourg to rise and go to confer with her. It was two o'clock, and she had just retired to bed. 'She expects you,' he added, 'and will not go to sleep without speaking to you.' I dressed myself in haste and ran to her.

She appeared to be agitated; it was the first time. Her distress affected me. In this moment of surprise, and in the night, I myself was not free from emotion; but on seeing her I forgot my own situation, and thought of nothing but herself, and the melancholy part she would have to play should I suffer myself to be arrested; for, while feeling that I had sufficient courage strictly to adhere to truth, although I might be certain of its being prejudicial or even destructive to me, I was con-

vinced that I had not presence of mind, address, nor perhaps firmness enough to avoid exposing her should I be closely pressed. This determined me to sacrifice my reputation to her tranquillity, and to do for her on this occasion that which nothing could have prevailed upon me to do for myself. The moment I had come to this resolution I declared it, wishing not to diminish the magnitude of the sacrifice by giving her the least trouble to obtain it. I am sure she could not mistake my motive, although she said not a word which proved to me she was sensible of it. I was so much shocked at her indifference that for a moment I thought of retracting; but the Maréchal came in, and Madame de Boufflers arrived from Paris a few moments afterwards. They did what Madame de Luxembourg ought to have done. I suffered myself to be flattered; I was ashamed to retract; and all that remained to be decided was the place of my retreat and the time of my departure. Monsieur de Luxembourg proposed to me to remain with him incognito a few days, that we might deliberate at leisure, and take such measures as should seem most proper; to this I could not consent, no more than to go secretly to the Temple. I was determined to set off the same day rather than remain concealed in any place whatever.

Knowing that I had secret and powerful enemies in the kingdom, I thought, notwithstanding my attachment to France, that I ought to quit it, the better to insure my future tranquillity. My first intention was to retire to Geneva; but a moment of reflection was sufficient to dissuade me from committing that act of folly. I knew that the ministry of France, more powerful at Geneva than at Paris, would not leave me more at peace in one of these cities than in the other, were a resolution taken to torment me. I was also convinced that *Le Discours sur l'Inégalité* had excited against me in the Council a

hatred the more dangerous since it dared not make itself manifest. I had also learned that when *La Nouvelle Héloïse* appeared, the same Council had hastened to forbid the sale of that work, upon the solicitation of Doctor Tronchin; but, perceiving the example was not imitated, even in Paris, the members were ashamed of what they had done, and withdrew the prohibition. I had no doubt that, finding in the present case a more favourable opportunity, they would be very careful to take advantage of it. Notwithstanding exterior appearances, I knew that there reigned against me in the heart of every Genevese a secret jealousy, which only awaited an occasion to show itself. Nevertheless, love of country called me to my own, and, could I have flattered myself that I might there live in peace, I should not have hesitated; but, neither honour nor reason permitting me to seek refuge there as a fugitive, I resolved to approach it only, and to wait in Switzerland until something relative to me should be determined upon in Geneva. This state of uncertainty did not, as it will soon appear, continue long.

Madame de Boufflers highly disapproved this resolution, and renewed her efforts to induce me to go to England: all she could say was of no effect. I have never loved England nor the English and the eloquence of Madame de Boufflers, far from conquering my repugnance, seemed to increase it without my knowing why.

Determined to set off the same day, I was from the morning inaccessible to everybody; and La Roche, whom I sent to fetch my papers, would not tell Thérèse whether I was gone or no. Since I had determined some day to write my own memoirs, I had collected a great number of letters and other papers, so that much going to and fro was necessary. A part of these papers, already selected, were laid aside, and I employed the morning in sorting

the rest, that I might take with me such only as were useful and destroy what remained. Monsieur de Luxembourg was kind enough to assist me in this business, which we could not finish in the forenoon, and I had not time to burn a single paper. Monsieur le Maréchal offered to take upon himself to sort what I should leave behind me, and throw into the fire every sheet that he found useless, without trusting to any person whomsoever, and to send me those of which he should make choice. I accepted his offer, very glad to be delivered from that care, that I might pass the few hours I had to remain with persons so dear to me, from whom I was going to separate for ever. He took the key of the chamber in which I had left these papers; and, at my earnest solicitation, sent for my poor 'aunt,' who, not knowing what was become of me, or what was to become of herself, and in momentary expectation of the arrival of the officers of justice without knowing how to act or what to answer them, was wofully perplexed. La Roche accompanied her to the château in silence; she thought I was already far away. On perceiving me, she made the place resound with her cries, and threw herself into my arms. O friendship, affinity of sentiment, habit, and intimacy! In this pleasing yet cruel moment were concentrated many days of happiness, tenderness, and peace passed together, augmenting the grief of a first separation after a union of seventeen years, during which we had scarcely lost sight of each other for a single day. The Maréchal, who saw this embrace, could not suppress his tears. He withdrew. Thérèse resolved nevermore to leave me. I made her understand the inconvenience of accompanying me at that moment, and the necessity of her remaining to take charge of my effects and collect my money. When an order is made to arrest a man, it is customary to seize his papers, and put a seal upon his

effects, or to make an inventory of them and appoint a guardian, to whose care they are intrusted. It was necessary that she should remain to observe what passed, and get everything settled in the most advantageous manner possible. I promised her that she should shortly come to me; Monsieur le Maréchal confirmed my promise; but I did not choose to tell her whither I was going, that, in case she should be interrogated by the persons who came to take me into custody, she might with truth plead ignorance upon that head. In embracing her the moment before we separated, I felt within me a most extraordinary emotion, and I said to her with an agitation which, alas! was but too prophetic, 'My child, you must arm yourself with courage. You have partaken of my prosperity; it now remains to you, since you have chosen it, to partake of my misery. Expect nothing in future but insult and calamity in my train. The destiny begun for me by this melancholy day will pursue me until my latest hour.'

I had now nothing to think of but my departure. The officers were to arrive at ten o'clock. It was four in the afternoon when I set off, and they had not yet come. It was determined that I should travel post. I had no carriage. The Maréchal made me a present of a cabriolet, and lent me horses and a postillion as far as the first stage, where, in consequence of the measures he had taken, I had no difficulty in procuring others.

As I had not dined at table, nor made my appearance in the château, the ladies came to bid me adieu in the *entresol*, where I had passed the day. Madame la Maréchale embraced me several times with a melancholy air, but I did not in these embraces feel the fervour of those that she had lavished upon me two or three years before. Madame de Boufflers also embraced me, and said to me many civil things. An embrace which sur-

prised me more than all the rest had done was one from Madame de Mirepoix, for she also was there. Madame la Maréchale de Mirepoix is a person extremely cold, decent, and reserved, and did not seem quite exempt from the natural haughtiness of the House of Lorraine. She had never shown me much attention. Whether, flattered by an honour I had not expected, I endeavoured to enhance its value, or that there really was in the embrace a little of that commiseration natural to generous hearts, I found in her manner and look a kind of energy which penetrated me. I have since that time frequently thought that, acquainted with my destiny, she could not refrain from a momentary concern for my fate.

Monsieur le Maréchal did not open his mouth. He was as pale as death. He would absolutely accompany me to the carriage, which waited at the horse-trough. We crossed the garden without uttering a single word. I had a key of the park, with which I opened the gate, and instead of putting it again into my pocket I tendered it to him without saying a word. He took it with a vivacity which surprised me, and which has since frequently intruded itself upon my thoughts. I have seldom in my whole life had a more bitter moment than that of this separation. Our embrace was long and silent: we both felt that this embrace was a last adieu.

Between La Barre and Montmorency I met, in a hired carriage, four men in black, who saluted me smilingly. According to what Thérèse has since told me of the officers of justice, the hour of their arrival and their manner of behaviour, I have no doubt that they were the persons I met, especially as the order to arrest me, instead of being made out at seven o'clock, as I had been told it would, had not been given till noon. I had to go through Paris. A person in a cabriolet is not much concealed. I saw several persons in the streets who

saluted me with an air of familiarity, but I did not know one of them. The same evening I changed my route to go to Villeroy. At Lyons the couriers should be conducted to the commander. This might have been embarrassing to a man unwilling either to lie or change his name. I went with a letter from Madame de Luxembourg to beg Monsieur de Villeroy would cause me to be spared this disagreeable ceremony. Monsieur de Villeroy gave me a letter, of which I made no use, because I did not go through Lyons. This letter still remains sealed up amongst my papers. Monsieur le Duc pressed me to sleep at Villeroy, but I preferred returning to the high-road, which I did, and travelled two more stages the same evening.

My carriage was uncomfortable, and I was too much indisposed to go far in a day. My appearance, besides, was not sufficiently distinguished for me to be well served, and in France post-horses only feel the whip upon the postillion's shoulders. By paying the guides generously, I thought I should make up for my appearance and address. This was still worse. They took me for a mean fellow who was carrying orders, and for the first time in my life travelling post. From that moment I had nothing but worn-out hacks, and I became the sport of the postillions. I ended as I should have begun, by being patient, holding my tongue, and suffering myself to be driven as they thought proper.

I had sufficient matter of reflection to prevent me from being weary on the road, employing myself in reviewing all that had just happened; but this was neither my turn of mind nor the inclination of my heart. The facility with which I forget past evils, however recent they may be, is astonishing. The remembrance of them becomes feeble, and, sooner or later, effaced, in inverse proportion to the greater degree of fear with which the

approach of them inspires me. My cruel imagination, incessantly tormented by the apprehension of evils still at a distance, diverts my attention, and prevents me from recollecting those which are past. Caution is needless after the evil has happened, and it is time lost to give it a thought. I, in some measure, put a period to my misfortunes before they happen; the more I have suffered at their approach, the greater is the facility with which I forget them; whilst, on the contrary, incessantly recollecting my past happiness, I recall and ruminate on it, if I may so speak, even to the point of enjoying it anew at will. It is to this happy disposition that I am indebted for an exemption from that rancorous humour which ferments in a vindictive mind by the continual remembrance of injuries received, and torments it with all the evil it wishes to do its enemy. Naturally choleric, I have felt all the force of anger, which in the first moments has sometimes been carried to fury; but a desire of vengeance never took root within me. I think too little of the offence to give myself much trouble about the offender. I think of the injury I have received from him only on account of that which he may do me a second time; and were I certain he would never do me another, the first would be instantly forgotten. Pardon of offences is continually preached to us; it is doubtless a very fine virtue, but it concerns not me. I know not whether my heart would be capable of overcoming its hatred, for it never yet felt that passion, and I bestow too little thought on my enemies to have the merit of pardoning them. I will not say to what a degree, in order to torment me, they torment themselves. I am at their mercy, they have unbounded power, and use it. There is but one thing beyond them, and in which I set them at defiance — that is, in tormenting themselves about me, to force me to give myself the least trouble about them.

The day following my departure, I had so perfectly forgotten what had passed — the Parliament, Madame de Pompadour, Monsieur de Choiseul, Grimm, and D'Alembert, with their plots and conspiracies, — that, had it not been for the necessary precautions during the journey, I should have thought no more of them. The remembrance of one thing which supplied the place of all these was what I had read the evening before my departure. I recollected also Gesner's *Idylls*, which his translator Hubert had sent me a little time before. These two ideas occurred to me so strongly, and were connected in such a manner in my mind, that I was determined to endeavour to unite them by treating, after the manner of Gesner, the subject of the Levite of Ephraim. His pastoral and simple style appeared to me but little fitted to so horrid a subject, and it was not to be presumed that my situation at that moment would furnish me with such ideas as would enliven it. However, I attempted the thing, solely to amuse myself in my cabriolet, and without the least hope of success. I had no sooner begun than I was astonished at the gaiety of my ideas, and the facility with which I could express them. In three days I composed the three first cantos of this little poem, which I finished at Motiers, and I am certain of not having done anything in my life in which there is a more interesting mildness of manner, a greater brilliancy of colouring, more simple delineation, greater exactness of proportion, or more antique simplicity in general, notwithstanding the horror of the subject, which in itself is abominable, so that, besides every other merit, I had still that of a difficulty conquered. If *Le Lévite d'Ephraïm* be not the best of my works, it will ever be the one I hold most dear. I have never read, nor shall I ever read it again, without feeling within the applause of a heart without acrimony, which, far from being em-

bittered by misfortunes, is susceptible of consolation in the midst of them, and finds within itself a resource by which they are counterbalanced. Assemble the great philosophers, so superior in their books to adversity which they never suffered, place them in a situation similar to mine, and, in the first moments of indignation consequent on injured honour, give them a like work to compose: it will be seen in what manner they will acquit themselves of the task.

When I set off from Montmorency to go into Switzerland, I had resolved to stop at Yverdun, at the house of my good old friend Monsieur Roguin, who had several years before retired to that place, and had invited me to go and see him. I had been told that Lyons was not the direct road, for which reason I avoided going through it. But, on the other hand, I was obliged to pass through Besançon, a fortified town, and consequently subject to the same inconvenience. I took it into my head to turn about and go through Salins, under the pretence of going to see Monsieur de Mairan, the nephew of Monsieur Dupin, who had an employment at the saltworks, and formerly had given me many invitations to his house. The expedient succeeded. Monsieur de Mairan was not in the way, and, happily, not being obliged to stop, I continued my journey without being spoken to by anybody.

The moment I was within the territory of Berne, I bade them to stop. I got out of my carriage, prostrated myself, kissed the ground, and exclaimed in a transport of joy: 'Heaven, the protector of virtue, be praised I touch a land of liberty!' Thus, blind and unsuspecting in my hopes, have I ever been passionately attached to that which was to make me unhappy. The astonished postillion thought me mad. I regained the carriage, and a few hours afterwards I had the pure and lively satis-

faction of feeling myself pressed within the arms of the worthy Roguin. Ah! let me breathe for a moment with this estimable host. It is necessary that I should gain strength and courage before I proceed further; I shall soon find need for both.

It is not without reason that I have been diffuse, in the foregoing recital, respecting all the circumstances I have been able to recollect. Although they may seem a little uninteresting, yet, when once the thread of the conspiracy is grasped, they may throw some light upon its progress; and, for example, without giving the first idea of the problem I am going to propose, they afford some aid in solving it.

Suppose that, for the execution of the conspiracy of which I was the object, my absence was absolutely necessary, everything tending to that effect could not have happened otherwise than it did; but if, without suffering myself to be startled by the nocturnal embassy of Madame de Luxembourg and troubled by her alarm, I had continued to hold out as I had begun, and, instead of remaining at the castle, returned to my bed and slept quietly until morning, should I have equally had an order of arrest made out against me? This is a great question, upon which the solution of many others depends; and for the examination of it, the hour of the comminatory decree and that of the real decree may be remarked to advantage — a rude but evident example of the importance of the least detail in the exposition of facts of which the secret causes are sought, that they may be discovered by induction.

# BOOK XII

## [1762]

HERE begins the work of darkness in which I have for the last eight years been enveloped, without — strive as I would — being able to penetrate the dreadful obscurity. In the abyss of evil into which I am plunged, I feel the blows reach me, and see the immediate instruments; but I cannot perceive the hand by which they are directed, or the means it employs. Shame and misfortune seem of themselves to fall upon me invisibly. When in the affliction of my heart I suffer a groan to escape me, I have the appearance of a man who complains without reason, and the authors of my ruin have acquired the inconceivable art of making the public, unknown to itself, or without its perceiving the effects of it, an accomplice in their conspiracy. Therefore, in my narrative of circumstances relative to myself, of the treatment I have received, and all that has happened to me, I shall not be able to indicate the directing hand nor assign the causes, while I state the effect. The primitive causes are all given in the preceding books; everything in which I am interested, and all the secret motives, are pointed out. But it is impossible for me to explain, even by conjecture, how the different causes combine to bring about the strange events of my life. If any amongst my readers should be generous enough to wish to probe the mystery to the bottom and discover the truth, let them read carefully over a second time the three preceding books; afterwards, at each fact they shall find stated in the books which follow, let them gain such information

as is within their reach, and go back from intrigue to intrigue, and from agent to agent, until they come to the first mover of all. I know where their researches will terminate; but in the meantime I lose myself in the crooked and obscure subterranean path through which their steps must be directed.

During my stay at Yverdun, I became acquainted with all the family of Monsieur Roguin, and amongst others with his niece, Madame Boy de La Tour, and her daughters, whose father, as I think I have already observed, I had formerly known at Lyons. She was at Yverdun upon a visit to her uncle and his sisters; her eldest daughter, about fifteen years of age, delighted me by her fine understanding and excellent disposition. I conceived the most tender friendship for the mother and the daughter. The latter was destined by Monsieur Roguin to the colonel his nephew, a man already verging towards the decline of life, and who also showed me marks of great esteem and affection; but, although the heart of the uncle was set upon this marriage, which was much wished for by the nephew also, and I was very desirous to promote the satisfaction of both, the great disproportion of age and the extreme repugnancy of the young lady made me join with the mother in opposing this union, which did not take place. The colonel has since married Mademoiselle Dillan, his relation, beautiful and amiable as my heart could wish, and who has made him the happiest of husbands and fathers. Nevertheless Monsieur Roguin has not yet forgotten my opposition to his wishes. My consolation is in the certainty of having discharged to him and his family the duty of the most pure friendship, which does not always consist in being agreeable, but in advising for the best.

I did not remain long in doubt about the reception which awaited me at Geneva, had I chosen to return to

that city. My book was burned there, and on the 18th of June, nine days after an order to arrest me had been issued at Paris, another to the same effect was determined upon by the Republic. So many incredible absurdities were stated in this second decree, in which the ecclesiastical edict was formally violated, that I refused to believe the first accounts I heard of it, and when these were well-confirmed, I trembled lest so manifest an infraction of every law, beginning with that of common sense, should throw Geneva into utter confusion. I was, however, relieved from my fears; everything remained quiet. If there was any rumour amongst the populace, it was unfavourable to me, and I was publicly treated by all the gossips and pedants like a scholar threatened with a flogging for not having said his catechism.

These two decrees were the signal for the cry of malediction raised against me with unexampled fury in every part of Europe. All the gazettes, journals, and pamphlets loudly rang the tocsin. The French especially, that mild, generous, and polished people, who pique themselves so much upon their attention and proper condescension to the unfortunate, instantly forgetting their favourite virtues, signalised themselves by the number and violence of the outrages wherewith each vied with the other in overwhelming me. I was impious, an atheist, a madman, a wild beast, a wolf. The continuator of the *Journal de Trévous* was guilty of a piece of extravagance in attacking my pretended lycanthropy, which was no mean proof of his own. One would have thought that an author in Paris was afraid of incurring the animadversion of the police by publishing a work of any kind without cramming into it some insult to me. In seeking vainly the cause of this unanimous animosity, I was almost tempted to believe the world was gone mad. What! the editor of the *Perpetual Peace* spread discord;

the author of the *Savoyard Vicar* impious; the writer of the *Nouvelle Héloïse* a wolf; the author of *Émile* a madman! Gracious God! what then should I have been had I published the book entitled *De l'Esprit*,[1] or any similar work? And yet in the storm raised against the author of that book, the public, far from joining the cry of his persecutors, avenged him by their eulogies. Let his book and mine, the reception the two works met with, and the treatment of the two authors in the different countries of Europe, be compared; and for the difference let causes satisfactory to a man of sense be found, and I will ask no more.

I found the residence of Yverdun so agreeable that I resolved to yield to the earnest solicitations of Monsieur Roguin and his family, who were desirous of keeping me there. Monsieur de Moiry de Gingins, bailli of that city, encouraged me by his goodness to remain within his jurisdiction. The colonel pressed me so much to accept for my habitation a little pavilion he had in his house, between the court and the garden, that I complied with his request, and he immediately furnished it with everything necessary for my little household. The Banneret Roguin, one of the persons who showed me the most assiduous attention, did not leave me during the whole day. I was much flattered by his civilities, but they sometimes worried me. The day on which I was to take possession of my new habitation was already fixed, and I had written to Thérèse to come to me, when suddenly a storm was raised against me in Berne, which was attributed to religious fanatics, but I have never been able to learn the primary cause of it. The Senate, excited against me, without my knowing by whom, did not seem disposed to suffer me to remain undisturbed in my retreat. The moment Monsieur le Bailli was informed of

[1] By Claude Adrien Helvétius (1715–1771).

the new fermentation, he wrote in my favour to several members of the Government, reproaching them with their blind intolerance, and telling them it was shameful to refuse to a man of merit, under oppression, the asylum which so many banditti found in their States. Sensible people were of opinion that the warmth of his reproaches had rather embittered than softened the minds of the magistrates. However this may be, neither his influence nor his eloquence could ward off the blow. Having received an intimation of the order he was to signify to me, he gave me a previous communication of it; and, that I might not await its arrival, I resolved to set off the next day. The difficulty was to know whither to go, finding myself shut out from Geneva and France, and foreseeing that in this affair each State would be anxious to imitate its neighbour.

Madame Boy de La Tour proposed to me to go and reside in an uninhabited but completely furnished house, which belonged to her son, in the village of Motiers, in the Val de Travers, in the county of Neufchâtel. I had only a mountain to cross to arrive at it. The offer came the more opportunely, as in the States of the King of Prussia I should naturally be sheltered from persecution, at least religion could hardly serve as a pretext for it. But a secret difficulty, that I did not choose to divulge, had in it sufficient to make me hesitate. That innate love of justice to which my heart was constantly subject, added to my secret inclination to France, had inspired me with an aversion to the King of Prussia, who, by his maxims and conduct, seemed to tread underfoot all respect for natural law and every duty of humanity. Amongst the framed engravings with which I had decorated my donjon at Montmorency was a portrait of this prince, and under it a distich, which ended thus: —

'Il pense en philosophe, et se conduit en roi.'

This, which from any other pen would have been a pretty compliment, from mine had an equivocal meaning, and too clearly explained the verse by which it was preceded.[1] The distich had been seen by everybody who came to see me, and my visitors were numerous. The Chevalier de Lorenzi had even written it down to give it to D'Alembert, and I had no doubt but D'Alembert had taken care to make his court with it to the prince. I had also aggravated this first fault by a passage in *Émile*, where, under the name of Adrastus, king of the Daunians, it was clearly seen whom I had in view, and the remark had not escaped commentators, for Madame de Boufflers had several times mentioned the subject to me. I was therefore certain of being inscribed in red ink on the registers of the King of Prussia, and besides, supposing that he held the principles I had dared to attribute to him, he, for that reason, could not but be displeased with my writings and their author; for everybody knows that the evil-disposed and tyrants have never failed to conceive the most mortal hatred against me, solely on reading my works, without being acquainted with my person.

However, I had presumption enough to depend upon his mercy, and was far from thinking I ran much risk. I knew none but weak men were slaves to the baser passions, and that these had but little power over strong minds, such as I had always thought his to be. According to his art of reigning, I thought he could not but show himself magnanimous on this occasion, and that being so in fact was not above his character. I thought a mean and easy vengeance would not for a moment counter-

[1] This verse ran —

'La gloire, l'intérêt, voilà son Dieu, sa loi.'

It did not precede the verse cited in the text. That was at the foot of the portrait; the other was written at the back.

balance his love of glory, and, putting myself in his place, his taking advantage of circumstances to overwhelm with the weight of his generosity a man who had dared to think ill of him did not appear to me impossible. I therefore went to settle at Motiers, with a confidence of which I imagined he would feel all the value, and said to myself: When Jean-Jacques rises to the elevation of Coriolanus, will Frederick sink below the General of the Volsci?

Colonel Roguin insisted on crossing the mountains with me, and installing me at Motiers. A sister-in-law to Madame Boy de La Tour, named Madame Girardier, to whom the house in which I was going to live was very convenient, did not see me arrive there with pleasure; however, she with a good grace put me in possession of my lodging, and I boarded with her until Thérèse came, and my little establishment was formed.

Perceiving at my departure from Montmorency that I should in future be a fugitive upon the earth, I hesitated about permitting her to come to me and partake of the wandering life to which I saw myself condemned. I felt that owing to this catastrophe the nature of our relation to each other was about to change, and that what until then had on my part been favour and friendship would in future become so on hers. If her attachment were proof against my misfortunes, I knew that these must deeply grieve her, and that her grief would add to my pain. Should my disgrace weaken her affections, she would make me consider her constancy as a sacrifice, and, instead of feeling the pleasure I had in dividing with her my last morsel of bread, she would see nothing but her own merit in electing to follow me wherever I was driven by fate.

I must say everything. I have never concealed the vices either of my poor Mamma or myself; I cannot be

more favourable to Thérèse, and, whatever pleasure I may have in doing honour to a person who is dear to me, I will not disguise the truth, although it may discover in her an error, if an involuntary change in the affections of the heart be one. I had long perceived hers to grow cooler towards me, and that she was no longer to me what she had been in our younger days; and of this I was the more sensible, as for her I was what I had always been. I fell into the same inconvenience the effect of which I had felt with Mamma, and this effect was the same now that I was with Thérèse. Let us not seek for perfection, which nature never produces; it would be the same thing with any other woman. The manner in which I had disposed of my children, however reasonable it had appeared to me, had not always left my heart at ease. While writing my *Traité de l'Éducation* I felt that I had neglected duties with which it was not possible to dispense. Remorse at length became so strong that it almost forced from me a public confession of my fault at the beginning of my *Émile*, and the passage is so clear that it is astonishing how any person should, after reading it, have had the courage to reproach me.[1] My situation was, however, still the same, or something worse, by the animosity of my enemies, who sought to detect me in a fault. I feared a relapse, and, unwilling to run the risk, I preferred abstinence to exposing Thérèse to a similar mortification. I had besides remarked that a connection with women was prejudicial to my health; this double reason made me form resolutions which I had sometimes but badly kept, but for the last three or four years I had more constantly adhered to them. It was in this interval I had remarked Thérèse's coolness. She had the same

[1] 'A father, when he begets and feeds children, thereby performs but a third part of his task. . . . He who cannot fulfil the duties of a father has no right to become such.' — *Émile*, Book 1.

attachment to me from duty, but no longer from love. Our intercourse naturally became less agreeable, and I imagined that, certain of the continuation of my care wherever she might be, she would choose to stay at Paris rather than to wander with me. Yet she had given such signs of grief at our parting, had required of me such positive promises that we should meet again, and, since my departure, had shown to Monsieur le Prince de Conti and Monsieur de Luxembourg so strong a desire of it, that, far from having the courage to speak to her of separation, I scarcely had enough to think of it myself; and, after having felt in my heart how impossible it was for me to do without her, all I thought of afterwards was to recall her to me as soon as possible. I wrote to her to this effect, and she came. It was scarcely two months since I had quitted her, but it was our first separation after so many years. We had both of us felt it most cruelly. What emotion in our first embrace! Oh, how delightful are the tears of tenderness and joy! How does my heart drink them up! Why have I not had reason to shed them more frequently?

On my arrival at Motiers I had written to Lord Keith, Marshal of Scotland and Governor of Neufchâtel, informing him of my retreat into the States of his Prussian Majesty, and requesting of him his protection. He answered me with his well-known generosity, and in the manner I had expected from him. He invited me to his house. I went with Monsieur Martinet, Châtelain of Val de Travers, who was in great favour with his excellency. The venerable appearance of this illustrious and virtuous Scotchman powerfully affected my heart, and from that instant began between him and me the strong attachment which on my part still remains the same, and would be so on his had not the traitors who have deprived me of all the consolations of life taken ad-

vantage of my absence to deceive his old age and depreciate me in his esteem.

George Keith, Hereditary Marshal of Scotland, and brother to the famous General Keith, who lived gloriously and died on the bed of honour, had quitted his country at a very early age, and was proscribed on account of his attachment to the House of Stuart. With that house, however, he soon became disgusted by the unjust and tyrannical spirit he observed in it — always its ruling characteristic. He lived a long time in Spain, the climate of which pleased him exceedingly, and at length attached himself, as his brother had done, to the service of the King of Prussia, who knew the nature of men, and gave them the reception they merited. He was well rewarded for this reception in the services rendered him by Marshal Keith, and by what was infinitely more precious, the sincere friendship of his lordship. The great mind of this worthy man, haughty and republican, could stoop to no other yoke than that of friendship; but to this he was so obedient that, with very different maxims, he saw nothing but Frederick from the moment he became attached to him. The King charged the Marshal with affairs of importance, sent him to Paris, to Spain, and at length, seeing he was already advanced in years and in need of repose, let him retire with the government of Neufchâtel, and the delightful employment of passing there the remainder of his life in rendering that little population happy.

The people of Neufchâtel, whose manners are frivolous, know not how to distinguish solid merit, and suppose wit to consist in long discourses. When they saw a sedate man, of simple manners, appear amongst them, they mistook his simplicity for haughtiness, his candour for rusticity, his laconism for stupidity, and rejected his benevolent regard, because, wishing to be useful, and not

being a sycophant, he knew not how to flatter people he did not esteem. In the ridiculous affair of the minister Petitpierre, who was expelled by his colleagues for having been unwilling that they should be eternally damned, my lord, opposing the usurpations of the ministers, saw the whole country of which he took the part rise up against him, and when I arrived there the stupid murmur had not entirely subsided. He passed for a man influenced by the prejudices of others, and of all the imputations brought against him it was perhaps the least unjust. My first sentiment on seeing this venerable old man was that of tender commiseration on account of his extreme leanness of body, years having already left him almost fleshless; but, when I raised my eyes to his animated, open, noble countenance, I felt a respect mingled with confidence which absorbed every other sentiment. He answered the very short compliment that I made him when I first came into his presence by speaking of something else, as if I had already been a week in his house. He did not even bid us sit down. The stupid châtelain remained standing. For my part, I saw in the fine and piercing eye of his lordship something so conciliating that, feeling myself entirely at ease, I took my seat unceremoniously by his side upon the sofa. By the familiarity of his manner I immediately perceived that the liberty I took gave him pleasure, and that he said to himself, 'This is not a Neufchâtelois.'

Singular effect of the similarity of characters! At an age when the heart loses its natural warmth, that of this good old man grew warm towards me to a degree which surprised everybody. He came to see me at Motiers, under the pretence of quail-shooting, and stayed there two days without touching a gun. We conceived such a friendship for each other that we knew not how to live separate. The Château of Colombier, where he passed

the summer, was six leagues from Motiers. I went there at least once a fortnight, and made a stay of twenty-four hours, and then returned like a pilgrim with my heart full of affection for my host. The emotion I had formerly experienced in my journeys from the Hermitage to Eaubonne was certainly very different, but it was not more pleasing than that with which I approached Colombier. What tears of tenderness have I often shed when on the road to it, while thinking of the paternal goodness, amiable virtues, and charming philosophy of this worthy old man! I called him father, and he called me son. These affectionate names give, in some measure, an idea of the attachment by which we were united, but by no means that of the want we felt of each other, nor of our continual desire to be together. He would absolutely give me an apartment at the Château of Colombier, and for a long time pressed me to take up my residence in that in which I lodged during my visits. I at length told him I felt more freedom in my own house, and that I had rather continue until the end of my life to come and see him. He approved of my candour, and never afterwards spoke to me on the subject. O my good lord! O my worthy father, how is my heart still moved when I think of you! Ah, barbarous wretches, how deeply did they wound me when they detached you from me! But no, great man, you are, and will ever be, the same for me, who am still the same. You have been deceived, but you are not changed.[1]

My Lord Marshal is not without faults; he is a man of wisdom, but still a man. With the greatest penetration, the nicest discrimination, and the most profound knowl-

[1] Marshal Keith, who was intimately acquainted with Hume, was sensibly hurt by Rousseau's quarrel with the historian, and expressed his sorrow on the occasion; but so little was he 'detached' from Rousseau that in May 1778 he bequeathed to him the watch he had always worn.

edge of men, he sometimes suffers himself to be deceived, and never recovers his error. His temper is very singular, and there is something odd and strange in his turn of mind. He seems to forget the people he sees every day, and thinks of them in a moment when they least expect it; his attention seems ill-timed; his presents are dictated by caprice and not by propriety; he gives or sends in an instant whatever comes into his head, be the value of it great or small. A young Genevese, desirous of entering into the service of Prussia, made a personal application to him. His lordship, instead of giving him a letter, gave him a little bag of peas, which he desired him to carry to the King. On receiving this singular recommendation his Majesty gave a commission to the bearer of it. These elevated geniuses have between themselves a language which the vulgar will never understand. These whimsicalities, something like the caprice of a fine woman, rendered him still more interesting to me. I was certain, and afterwards had proofs, that they had not the least influence over his sentiments, nor did they affect the cares prescribed by friendship on serious occasions; yet in his manner of obliging there is the same singularity as in his manners in general. Of this I will give one instance relative to a matter of no great importance. The journey from Motiers to Colombier being too long for me to perform in one day, I commonly divided it by setting off after dinner, and sleeping at Brot, which is half-way. The landlord of the house where I stopped, named Sandoz, having to solicit at Berlin a favour of extreme importance to him, begged I would request his excellency to ask it in his behalf. 'Most willingly,' said I, and took him with me. I left him in the antechamber, and mentioned the matter to his lordship, who returned me no answer. The whole forenoon passed: as I crossed the hall to go to dinner I saw poor Sandoz, who was

fatigued to death with waiting. Thinking that my lord had forgotten him, I again spoke of the business before we sat down to table, but still received no answer. I thought this manner of making me feel I was importunate rather severe, and, pitying the poor man in waiting, held my tongue. On my return the next day I was much surprised at the thanks he returned me for the good dinner his excellency had given him in addition to receiving his paper. Three weeks afterwards his lordship sent him the receipt he had solicited, dispatched by the minister and signed by the King, and this without having said a word either to myself or Sandoz concerning the business, with which I had supposed him unwilling to trouble himself.

I could wish incessantly to speak of George Keith; from him proceeds my recollection of the last happy moments I have enjoyed; all the rest of my life has been passed in affliction and grief of heart. The remembrance of this is so melancholy and confused that it was impossible for me to observe the least order in narrating events; henceforward I shall be obliged to set them down promiscuously, and as they present themselves to my mind.

I was soon relieved from my inquietude as to the certainty of my asylum by the answer from his Majesty to the Lord Marshal, in whom, as it will readily be believed, I had found an able advocate. The King not only approved of what he had done, but desired him — for I must relate everything — to give me twelve louis. The good old man, rather embarrassed by the commission, and not knowing well how to execute it, endeavoured to soften the insult by transforming the money into provisions, and writing to me that he had received orders to furnish me with wood and coal to begin my little establishment; he moreover added, and perhaps from

himself, that his Majesty would willingly build me a small house, such a one as I should choose to have provided I would fix upon the ground. I was extremely sensible of the last offer, which made me forget the pettiness of the other. Without accepting either, I considered Frederick as my benefactor and protector, and became so sincerely attached to him that from that moment I interested myself as much in his glory as until then I had thought his successes unjust. At the peace he concluded soon after I expressed my joy by an illumination in very good taste: it was a string of garlands with which I decorated the house I inhabited, and in which, it is true, I had the vindictive haughtiness to spend almost as much money as he had wished to give me. The peace ratified, I thought, as he was at the highest pinnacle of military and political fame, he would think of acquiring that of another nature, by reanimating his States, encouraging in them commerce and agriculture, creating a new soil, covering it with a new people, maintaining peace amongst his neighbours, and becoming the arbitrator, after having been the terror, of Europe. He was in a situation to sheathe his sword without danger, certain that none would oblige him again to draw it. Perceiving that he did not disarm, I feared that he would profit but little by his advantages, and that he would be great only by halves. I dared to write to him upon the subject, and with a familiarity of a nature to please men of his character, conveying to him the sacred voice of truth, which but few kings are worthy to hear. The liberty I took was a secret between him and myself. I did not communicate it even to the Lord Marshal, to whom I sent my letter to the King sealed up. His lordship forwarded my dispatch without asking what it contained. His Majesty returned me no answer; and the Marshal going soon after to Berlin, the King told him

he had received from me a good scolding. By this I understood that my letter had been ill received, and that the frankness of my zeal had been mistaken for the rusticity of a pedant. In fact, this might well be so; perhaps I did not say what was necessary, nor in the manner proper to the occasion. All I can answer for is the sentiment which induced me to take up my pen.

Shortly after my establishment at Motiers-Travers, having every possible assurance that I should be suffered to remain there in peace, I took the Armenian garb. This was not the first time I had thought of doing it: I had many times had the same intention, particularly at Montmorency, where the frequent use of probes, often obliging me to keep my chamber, made me more clearly perceive the advantages of a long robe. The convenience of an Armenian tailor, who frequently came to see one of his relations at Montmorency, almost tempted me to determine on taking this new dress, troubling myself but little about what the world would say of it. Yet, before adopting this new attire, I wished to have the opinion of Madame de Luxembourg, who strongly advised me to follow my inclination. I therefore procured a little Armenian wardrobe, but, on account of the storm raised against me, I was induced to postpone making use of it until I should enjoy tranquillity; and it was not until some months afterwards that, urged by new attacks of my disorder, I thought I could properly, and without the least risk, put on my new dress at Motiers, especially after having consulted the pastor of the place, who told me I might wear it even in the temple without scandal. I then adopted the vest, caftan, furred bonnet, and girdle, and after having in this dress attended divine service, I saw no impropriety in going in it to visit the Marshal. His excellency, on seeing me clothed

in this manner, made me no other compliment than that which consisted in saying 'Salamaleki,'[1] after which nothing more was said upon the subject, and I ceased to wear any other garments.

Having quite abandoned literature, all I now thought of was leading a quiet life, and one as agreeable as I could make it. When alone I have never felt weariness of mind, not even in complete inaction; my imagination, filling up every void, is sufficient to keep up my attention. The inactive babbling of a private circle, where, seated opposite to each other, the company move nothing but the tongue, is the only thing I have ever been unable to support. When walking and rambling about there is some satisfaction in conversation; the feet and eyes do something; but to hear people with their arms across speak of the weather, of the biting of flies, or, what is still worse, compliment each other, is to me an insupportable torment. That I might not live like a savage, I took it into my head to learn to make laces. Like the women, I carried my cushion with me when I went to make visits, or sat down to work at my door and chatted with passers-by. This made me the better support the emptiness of babbling, and enabled me to pass my time with my female neighbours without weariness. Several of these were very amiable, and not devoid of wit. One in particular, Isabelle d'Ivernois, daughter of the Procureur-général of Neufchâtel, I found so estimable as to induce me to enter with her into terms of particular friendship, from which she derived some advantage by the useful advice I gave her, and the services she received from me on occasions of importance, so that now a worthy and virtuous mother of a family, she is perhaps indebted to me for her reason, her husband, her life, and her happiness. On my part, I received from

[1] *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, iv. 6.

her gentle consolation, particularly during a melancholy winter, throughout which, when my sufferings were most cruel, she came to pass with Thérèse and me long evenings, which she made very short to us by her agreeable conversation, and our mutual openness of heart. She called me papa, and I called her daughter, and these names, which we still give to each other, will, I hope, continue to be as dear to her as they are to me. That my laces might be of some utility I gave them to my young female friends at their marriages, upon condition of their suckling their children. Isabelle's elder sister had one upon these terms, and well deserved it by her observance of them. Isabelle herself also received another, which, by intention, she as fully merited; but she has not been so happy as to be able to fulfil her wish. When I sent the laces to the two sisters I wrote each of them a letter. The first has been shown about in the world, the second has not the same celebrity: friendship proceeds with less noise.

Amongst the connections I made in my neighbourhood, of which I will not enter into a detail, I must mention that with Colonel Pury, who had a house upon the mountain where he came to pass the summer. I was not anxious to become acquainted with him, because I knew he was upon bad terms at court, and with the Lord Marshal, whom he did not visit. Yet, as he came to see me, and showed me much attention, I was under the necessity of returning his visit. This was repeated, and we sometimes dined with each other. At his house I became acquainted with Monsieur du Peyrou, and afterwards was on such intimate terms with him that I cannot pass his name over in silence.

Monsieur du Peyrou was an American, son to a commandant of Surinam, whose successor, Monsieur Le Chambrier, of Neufchâtel, married his widow. Left a

widow a second time, she came with her son to live in the country of her second husband. Du Peyrou, an only son, very rich, and tenderly beloved by his mother, had been carefully brought up, and his education was not lost upon him. He had acquired much general knowledge, a taste for the arts, and piqued himself upon his having cultivated the rational faculty. His Dutch air, cold and philosophic, his yellow complexion, and silent and close disposition, favoured this opinion. Although young, he was already deaf and gouty. This rendered his motions deliberate and very grave, and although he was fond of disputing, he in general spoke but little, because his hearing was bad. I was struck with his exterior, and said to myself, 'This is a thinker, a man of wisdom, such a one as anybody would be happy to have for a friend.' He frequently addressed himself to me without paying the least compliment, and this strengthened the favourable opinion I had already formed of him. He said but little to me of myself or my books, and still less of himself; he was not destitute of ideas, and what he said was fairly just. This justness and equality attracted my regard. He had neither the elevation of mind nor the discrimination of my Lord Marshal, but he had his simplicity: this was still representing him in something. I did not become infatuated with him, but he acquired my attachment from esteem, and by degrees this esteem led to friendship. With him, I totally forgot the objection that I made to Baron Holbach — that he was too rich — and I think I was wrong. I have learned to doubt whether a man who enjoys a large fortune, whoever he may be, can have a sincere liking for my principles and their author.

For a long time I saw but little of Du Peyrou, because I did not go to Neufchâtel, and he came but once a year to the mountain pertaining to Colonel Pury. Why did

I not go to Neufchâtel? This proceeded from a childishness upon which I must not be silent.

Although protected by the King of Prussia and the Lord Marshal, while I escaped persecution in my retreat, I did not escape the murmurs of the public, of municipal magistrates, and ministers. After the impulse given by France, it became fashionable to insult me in some way; these people would have been afraid to seem to disapprove of what my persecutors had done by not imitating them. The Classe of Neufchâtel — that is, the collective ministers of that city — gave the signal, by endeavouring to move the Council of State against me. This attempt not having succeeded, the ministers addressed themselves to the municipal magistrate, who immediately prohibited my book, treating me on all occasions with but little civility, and saying that, had I wished to reside in the city, I should not have been suffered to do it. They filled their *Mercure* with absurdities and the most stupid hypocrisy, which, although it made every man of sense laugh, incensed the people against me. This, however, did not prevent them from setting forth that I ought to be extremely grateful for their permission to live at Motiers, where they had no authority; they would willingly have measured me the air by the pint, provided I had paid dearly for it. They would have it that I was obliged to them for the protection the King granted me, in spite of the efforts they incessantly made to deprive me of it. Finally, failing of success, after having done me all the injury they could, and defamed me to the utmost of their power, they made a merit of their impotence, by boasting of their goodness in suffering me to stay in their country. My only answer ought to have been to laugh in their faces, but I was foolish enough to be vexed at them, and had the weakness to be unwilling to go to Neufchâtel — a resolve to which

I adhered for almost two years, as if it were not doing too much honour to such wretches to pay attention to their proceedings, which, good or bad, could not be imputed to them, because they never act but from a foreign impulse. Besides, minds without light or culture, whose sole objects of esteem are influence, power, and money, are far from imagining any respect is due to talents, and that it is dishonourable to injure and insult them.

A certain mayor of a village, who for sundry malversations had been deprived of his office, said to the lieutenant of Val-de-Travers, the husband of my Isabelle: 'I am told that this Rousseau has so much wit! bring him to me, that I may see if this be true.' The disapprobation of such a man ought certainly to have no effect upon those on whom it falls.

After the treatment I had received at Paris, Geneva, Berne, and even at Neufchâtel, I expected no greater favour from the pastor of this place. I had, however, been recommended to him by Madame Boy de La Tour, and he had given me a good reception; but in that country, where every new-comer is indiscriminately flattered, civilities signify but little. Yet, after my solemn reunion with the Reformed Church, and living in a Protestant country, I could not, without failing in my engagements, as well as in the duty of a citizen, neglect the public profession of the religion into which I had entered. I therefore attended divine service. On the other hand, in going to the holy table, I was afraid of exposing myself to a refusal, and it was by no means probable that, after the tumult excited at Geneva by the Council, and at Neufchâtel by the Classe, he would without difficulty administer to me the sacrament in his church. The time of communion approaching, I resolved to write to Monsieur de Montmollin, the minister, to

prove to him my goodwill and my desire of communicating, and declaring myself heartily united to the Protestant Church. I also told him, in order to avoid quibbles upon articles of faith, that I would not hearken to any particular explanation of dogmas. After thus putting myself in the right, I made myself easy, not doubting but that Monsieur de Montmollin would refuse to admit me without the preliminary discussion, which I wished to avoid, and that in this manner everything would be at an end without any fault of mine. I was deceived. When I least expected anything of the kind, Monsieur de Montmollin came to declare to me not only that he admitted me to the communion under the condition which I had proposed, but that he and his elders thought themselves much honoured by my being one of their flock. I never in my whole life felt greater surprise, or received from it more consolation. Living always alone and unconnected appeared to me a melancholy destiny, especially in adversity. In the midst of so many proscriptions and persecutions, I found it extremely pleasant to be able to say to myself: 'I am at least among my brethren'; and I went to the communion with an emotion of heart, and my eyes suffused with tears of tenderness, which perhaps were to God the most acceptable preparation that any one can take thither.

Some time afterwards his lordship sent me a letter from Madame de Boufflers, which he had received — at least I presume so — by means of D'Alembert, who was acquainted with the Marshal. In this letter, the first that lady had written to me since my departure from Montmorency, she rebuked me severely for having written to Monsieur de Montmollin, and especially for having communicated. I the less understood what she meant by her reproof, since, after my journey to Geneva, I had constantly declared myself a Protestant, and had

gone publicly to the Hôtel de Hollande without incurring the least censure from anybody. It appeared to me diverting enough that Madame de Boufflers should seek to direct my conscience in matters of religion. However, as I had no doubt that her intentions, little as I comprehended them, were wholly pure, I was not offended by this singular sally, and I answered her without anger, stating to her my reasons.

Meanwhile, calumnies in print were still industriously circulated, and their benign authors reproached the powers with treating me too mildly. For my part, I let them say and write what they pleased, without giving myself the least concern about the matter. I was told that there was a censure from the Sorbonne, but this I could not believe. What could the Sorbonne have to do in the matter? Did they wish to know to a certainty that I was not a Catholic? Everybody already knew it. Were they desirous of proving that I was not a good Calvinist? Of what consequence was this to them? It was taking upon themselves a singular care, and becoming the substitutes of our ministers. Before I saw this publication I thought it was distributed in the name of the Sorbonne by way of mockery, and when I had read it I was convinced that this was the case. But when at length there was not a doubt of its authenticity, all I could bring myself to believe was, that the Sorbonne ought to be transferred to the Petites-Maisons.

[1763.] I was more affected by another publication, because it came from a man for whom I always had an esteem, and whose constancy I admired, though I pitied his blindness. I mean the mandatory letter issued against me by the Archbishop of Paris.

I thought myself bound to answer it. This I could do without derogating from my dignity; the case was

something similar to that of the King of Poland. I have always detested brutal disputes, after the manner of Voltaire. I never combat but with dignity, and before I deign to defend myself I must be certain that he by whom I am attacked will not dishonour my retort. I had no doubt but that this letter was fabricated by the Jesuits, and, although they themselves were at that time in distress, I discovered in it their old principle of crushing the wretched. I was therefore at liberty to follow my own ancient maxim, by honouring the titulary author and refuting the work, which I think I did completely.

I found my residence at Motiers very agreeable, and nothing was wanting to determine me to end my days there but a certainty of the means of subsistence. Living is dear in that neighbourhood, and all my old projects had been overturned by the dissolution of my household arrangements, the establishment of others, the sale or squandering of my furniture, and the expenses I had necessarily incurred since my departure from Montmorency. The little capital which remained to me daily diminished. Two or three years were sufficient to consume the remainder without my having the means of renewing it, except by again engaging in literary pursuits, a pernicious profession which I had already abandoned.

Persuaded that everything which concerned me would soon change, and that the public, recovered from its frenzy, would make my powerful persecutors blush, I only endeavoured to prolong my resources until this happy revolution should take place, after which I could more freely choose amongst those which might offer themselves. To this effect I took up my *Dictionnaire de Musique*, which ten years' labour had so far advanced as to leave nothing wanting to it but the last corrections and the making of a fair copy. My books, which I had lately received, enabled me to finish this work; my

papers, sent me by the same conveyance, furnished me with the means of beginning my Memoirs, to which I was determined to give my whole attention. I began by transcribing the letters into a book, by which my memory might be guided in the order of facts and time. I had already selected those I intended to keep for this purpose, and for ten years the series was not interrupted. However, in preparing them for copying I found a gap at which I was surprised. This was for almost six months — from October 1756 to the March following. I recollected having put into my selection a number of letters from Diderot, De Deyleyre, Madame d'Épinay, Madame de Chenonceaux, etc., which filled up the void and were missing. What was become of them? Had any persons laid their hands upon my papers whilst they remained for some months in the Hôtel de Luxembourg? This was not conceivable, and I had seen Monsieur de Luxembourg take the key of the chamber in which I had deposited them. Many letters from different ladies, and all those from Diderot, being without date, on which account I had been under the necessity of dating them from memory and by guess before they could be put in order, I thought at first that I might have committed errors, and again looked them over for the purpose of seeing whether I could not find those which ought to fill up the void. This experiment did not succeed. I perceived the vacancy to be real, and that the letters had certainly been carried off. By whom, and for what purpose? This was what I could not comprehend. These letters, written prior to my great quarrels, and at the time of my first enthusiasm in the composition of *Julie*, could not be interesting to any person. They contained nothing more than cavillings by Diderot, jeerings from Deyleyre, assurances of friendship from Madame de Chenonceaux, and even from Madame d'Épinay, with whom I was then

upon the best of terms. To whom were these letters of consequence? To what use were they to be put? It was not until seven years afterwards that I suspected the object of the theft.

The deficiency being no longer doubtful, I looked over my rough drafts to see whether or not it was the only one. I found some, which, on account of the badness of my memory, made me suppose others in the multitude of my papers. Those I remarked were the draft of *La Morale Sensitive* and the extract of *Les Aventures de Mylord Édouard.* The last, I confess, made me suspect Madame de Luxembourg. It was La Roche, her valet de chambre, who had dispatched these papers to me, and I could think of nobody but herself to whom this fragment could be of consequence; but what concern could the other give her, any more than the rest of the missing letters, with which, even with evil intentions, nothing to my prejudice could be done, unless they were falsified? As for Monsieur le Maréchal, with whose real friendship for me, and invariable integrity, I was perfectly acquainted, I never could suspect him for a moment; I could not even continue to suspect Madame la Maréchale. The most reasonable supposition, after long vexing my mind in endeavouring to discover the author of the theft, was that which imputed it to D'Alembert, who, having wormed himself into the company of Madame de Luxembourg, might have found means to turn over these papers, and take from amongst them such manuscripts and letters as he might have thought proper, either for the purpose of endeavouring to stir up troubles and dissensions, or to appropriate those he should find useful to his own private purposes. I imagined that, deceived by the title of *La Morale Sensitive,* he might have supposed it to be the plan of a real treatise upon materialism, with which he would have armed himself against me in a man-

ner easy to be imagined. Certain that he would soon be undeceived by reading the sketch, and determined to quit all literary pursuits, these larcenies gave me but little concern. They were besides not the first the same hand had committed [1] upon me without my having complained. In a very little time I thought no more of the trick that had been played me than if nothing had happened, and began to collect the materials that remained in my hands, to be used in composing my *Confessions*.

I had long thought that the company of the ministers, or at least the citizens and burgesses, of Geneva would remonstrate against the infraction of the edict in the decree made against me. Everything remained quiet, at least to all exterior appearance; for discontent was general, and ready, on the first opportunity, openly to manifest itself. My friends, or persons calling themselves such, wrote letter after letter, exhorting me to come and put myself at their head, assuring me of public reparation on the part of the Council. The fear of the disturbance and troubles which might be caused by my presence prevented me from acquiescing in their desires, and, faithful to the oath I had formerly made, never to take the least part in any civil dissension in my native land, I chose rather to let the offence remain, and banish myself for ever from my country, than return to it by means which were violent and dangerous. It is true, I expected that the burgesses would make legal and peaceful remonstrances against an infraction in which their interests were deeply concerned; but no such steps were taken. Their leaders sought less the real redress of

[1] I had found in his *Éléments de Musique* many things taken from what I had written for the *Encyclopédie*, and which were given to him several years before the publication of his *Éléments*. I know not what he may have had to do with a book entitled *Dictionnaire des Beaux Arts*, but I found in it articles transcribed word for word from mine, and this long before the same articles were printed in the *Encyclopédie*. — R.

grievances than an opportunity to render themselves necessary. They caballed, but were silent, and suffered me to be bespattered by the gossips and hypocrites set on to render me odious in the eyes of the populace, and to attribute the Council's blundering action to a zeal in favour of religion.

After having vainly expected, during a whole year, that some one would remonstrate against an illegal proceeding, I at length took my own course, and, seeing myself abandoned by my fellow-citizens, determined to renounce my ungrateful country in which I had never lived, from which I had not received either inheritance or services, and by which, in return for the honour I had endeavoured to do it, I saw myself so unworthily treated by unanimous consent, since they who should have spoken had remained silent. I therefore wrote to the first syndic for that year — Monsieur Favre, if I remember rightly — a letter in which I solemnly surrendered my freedom of the city, carefully observing in it, however, that decency and moderation from which I have never departed in those proud actions which, in my misfortunes, the cruelty of my enemies has frequently forced from me.

This step opened the eyes of the citizens, who, feeling that they had neglected their own interests by abandoning my defence, took my part when it was too late. They had other wrongs which they joined to mine, and made these the subject of several well-reasoned representations, which they strengthened and extended, in proportion as the harsh refusals of the Council, supported by the ministry of France, made them more clearly perceive the project formed to subjugate them. These altercations produced several pamphlets which were indecisive, until that appeared entitled *Lettres Écrites de la Campagne*, a work written in favour of the Council, with infinite art, and by which the remonstrating party,

reduced to silence, was crushed for a time. This production, a lasting monument of the rare talents of its author, came from the Procureur-général Tronchin, a man of wit and an enlightened understanding, well versed in the laws and government of the Republic. *Siluit terra.*

[1764.] The remonstrators, recovered from their first overthrow, undertook to give an answer, and in time produced one which brought them off tolerably well. But they all looked to me, as the only person capable of entering the lists with a like adversary with hope of success. I confess I was of their opinion; and, excited by my former fellow-citizens, who thought it was my duty to aid them with my pen, as I had been the cause of their embarrassment, I undertook to refute the *Lettres Écrites de la Campagne*, and parodied the title of them by that of *Lettres Écrites de la Montagne*, which I gave to mine. I completed this enterprise so secretly that, at a meeting I had at Thonon with the chiefs of the malcontents to talk of their affairs, and where they showed me a sketch of their answer, I said not a word of mine, which was quite ready, fearing obstacles might arise relative to the printing, should the magistrates or my enemies hear the least whisper of what I had done. This work was, however, known in France before the publication; but they chose rather to let it appear than to suffer me to guess at the means by which my secret had been discovered. Concerning this I will state what I know, which is but trifling; what I have conjectured shall remain with myself.

I received at Motiers almost as many visits as at the Hermitage and Montmorency; but these, for the most part, were a different kind. They who had formerly come to see me were people who, having taste, talents, and principles something similar to mine, alleged them as

the causes of their visits, and introduced subjects on which I could converse. At Motiers the case was different, especially with the visitors who came from France. They were officers or other persons who had no taste for literature, nor had many of them read my works, although, according to their own accounts, they had travelled thirty, forty, sixty, and even a hundred leagues to come and see me, and admire the illustrious man, the celebrated, the very celebrated, the great man, etc. For from that time I received the most base and bare-faced flattery, from which the esteem of those with whom I associated had formerly sheltered me. As but few of my new visitors deigned to tell me who or what they were, and as they had neither read nor cast their eye over my works, nor had their researches and mine been directed to the same objects, I knew not upon what topic to speak to them. I waited for what they had to say, because it was for them to know and tell me the purpose of their visit. It will naturally be imagined that this did not produce conversations very interesting to me, although they, perhaps, were so to my visitors, according to the information they might wish to acquire: for, as I was without suspicion, I answered without reserve to every question they thought proper to ask me, and they commonly went away as well informed as myself of the particulars of my situation.

I was, for example, visited in this manner by Monsieur de Feins, equerry to the Queen and captain of cavalry in the Queen's regiment, who had the patience to pass several days at Motiers, and even to follow me on foot to La Ferrière, leading his horse by the bridle, without having with me any point of union, except our acquaintance with Mademoiselle Fel, and that we both played at bilboquet. Before and after Monsieur de Feins' visit I received another much more extraordinary. Two men

arrived on foot, each leading a mule loaded with his little baggage, lodged at the inn, took upon themselves the care of their mules, and asked to see me. By the equipage of these muleteers they were taken for smugglers, and the news that smugglers were come to see me was instantly spread. Their manner of addressing me sufficiently showed they were persons of another description; but without being smugglers they might be adventurers, and this doubt kept me for some time on my guard. They soon removed my apprehensions. One was Monsieur de Montauban, who had the title of Comte de la Tour du Pin, gentleman of Dauphiny; the other Monsieur Dastier, of Carpentras, an old officer, who had his cross of St. Louis in his pocket, because he could not display it. These gentlemen were of pleasing disposition and very intelligent; their conversation was agreeable and interesting; their manner of travelling, so much to my own taste, and but little like that of French gentlemen, in some measure gained them my attachment, which intercourse with them served to improve. Our acquaintance did not end with the visit; it is still kept up, and they have since been several times to see me, but not on foot — that was very well for the first time; but the more I have seen of these gentlemen, the less similarity have I found between their tastes and mine. I have not discovered their maxims to be such as I have ever observed, that my writings are familiar to them, or that there is any real sympathy between them and myself. What therefore did they want of me? Why came they to see me with such equipage? Why remain for several days? Why repeat their visit so often? Why so desirous of having me for their host? I did not at the time propose to myself these questions; but they have sometimes occurred to me since.

Won by their advances, my heart abandoned itself

without reserve, especially to Monsieur Dastier, with whose open countenance I was more particularly pleased. I even corresponded with him, and when I determined to print the *Lettres de la Montagne*, I thought of addressing myself to him, to deceive those by whom my packet was waited for upon the road to Holland. He had spoken to me a good deal, and perhaps purposely, upon the liberty of the press at Avignon; he offered me his services should I have anything to print there. I took advantage of the offer, and sent him successively by the post my first sheets. After having kept these for some time, he sent them back to me because, said he, no bookseller dared to undertake them; and I was obliged to have recourse to Rey, taking care to send my papers one after the other, and not to part with those which succeeded until I was advised of the reception of those already sent. Before the work was published, I found it had been seen in the offices of the ministers, and D'Escherny, of Neufchâtel, spoke to me of a book entitled *De l'Homme de la Montagne*, which D'Holbach had told him was written by me. I assured him, and it was true, that I never had written a book which bore that title. When the letters appeared he became furious, and accused me of falsehood, although I had simply told him the truth. By this means I was certain my manuscript had been read. As I could not doubt the fidelity of Rey, I had to give another direction to my conjectures, and that which seemed most rational was that my packets had been opened at the post-office.

Another acquaintance I made much about the same time, but which was begun by letters, was that with Monsieur Laliaud, of Nîmes, who wrote to me from Paris, begging I would send him a silhouette profile of myself; he said he was in want of it for my bust in marble, which Le Moine was making for him to be placed in his library. If this was a pretence invented to deceive, it fully suc-

ceeded. I imagined that a man who wished to have my bust in marble in his library had his head full of my works, consequently of my principles, and that he loved me because his mind was in unison with mine. It was natural that this idea should seduce me. I have since seen Monsieur Laliaud. I found him very ready to render me many trifling services, and to concern himself in my little affairs; but I have my doubts of his having, among the few books he ever read, taken up any one of those I have written. I do not know that he has a library, or that such a thing is of any use to him; and for the bust, he has only a bad figure in plaster, by Le Moine, from which he has caused to be engraved a hideous portrait that bears my name, as if it bore some resemblance to me.

The only Frenchman who seemed to come to see me on account of my sentiments and his taste for my works was a young officer of the regiment of Limousin, named Monsieur Séguier de Saint-Brisson. He made a figure in Paris, where he still perhaps distinguishes himself by his pleasing talents and wit. He came once to Montmorency in the winter which preceded my catastrophe. I was pleased with his vivacity. He afterwards wrote to me at Motiers; and whether he wished to flatter me, or that his head was turned by *Émile*, he informed me he was about to quit the service in order to live independently, and was learning the trade of a house-carpenter. He had an elder brother, a captain in the same regiment, the favourite of the mother, who, a devotee to excess, and directed by I know not what Abbé Tartufe, did not treat the younger son well, accusing him of irreligion, and, what was still worse, of the unpardonable crime of being connected with me. These were the grievances on account of which he was determined to break with his mother, and adopt the manner of life of which I have just spoken, all to play the part of the young Émile.

Alarmed at this petulance, I immediately wrote to him, endeavouring to make him change his resolution, and my exhortations were as strong as I could make them. They had their effect. He returned to his duty to his mother, and withdrew the resignation he had given to his colonel, who had been prudent enough to make no use of it, that the young man might have time to reflect upon what he had done. Saint-Brisson, cured of these follies, was guilty of another less alarming, but, to me, hardly less disagreeable than the rest—he became an author. He successively published two or three pamphlets, which announced a man not devoid of talents, but I have not to reproach myself with having encouraged him by my praises to continue to write.

Some time afterwards he came to see me, and we made together a pilgrimage to the Île de Saint-Pierre. During this journey I found him different from what he had been at Montmorency. He was in his manner something affected, which at first did not much disgust me, although I have since thought of it to his disadvantage. He once visited me at the Hôtel de Saint-Simon, as I passed through Paris on my way to England. I learned there what he had not told me, that he lived in the world of fashion, and often saw Madame de Luxembourg. Whilst I was at Tyre, I never heard from him, nor did he so much as make inquiry after me, by means of his relation Mademoiselle Séguier, my neighbour — a lady who never seemed favourably disposed towards me. In a word, the infatuation of Monsieur de Saint-Brisson ended suddenly, like the connection of Monsieur de Feins: but this man owed me nothing, and the former was under obligations to me, unless the follies I prevented him from committing were nothing more than affectation, which might very possibly be the case.

I had visits from Geneva also. The Delucs, father and

son, successively chose me for their attendant in sickness. The father was taken ill on the road, the son was already sick when he left Geneva; they both came to recover at my house. Ministers, relations, hypocrites, and persons of every description came from Geneva and Switzerland, not like those from France, to laugh at and admire me, but to rebuke and catechise me. The only person amongst them who gave me pleasure was Moultou, who passed with me three or four days, and whom I wished to retain much longer; the most persevering of all, the most obstinate, and who conquered me by importunity, was a Monsieur d'Ivernois, a merchant of Geneva, a French refugee, and related to the Procureur-général of Neufchâtel. This Monsieur d'Ivernois came from Geneva to Motiers twice a year on purpose to see me, remained with me several days together from morning to night, accompanied me in my walks, brought me a thousand little presents, insinuated himself against my will into my confidence, and intermeddled in all my affairs, notwithstanding there was not between him and myself the least similarity of ideas, inclination, sentiment, or knowledge. I do not believe he ever read a book of any kind throughout, or that he knows upon what subjects mine are written. When I began to herborise, he followed me in my botanical rambles, without taste for that amusement, or having anything to say to me, or I to him. He had the patience to pass with me three days in a tavern at Goumoins, whence, by wearying him, and making him feel how much he wearied me, I was in hopes of driving him. I could not, however, shake his incredible perseverance, nor by any means discover the motive of it.

Amongst these connections, which were neither made nor continued without constraint, I must not omit the only one that was agreeable to me, and in which my heart

was really interested: that which I contracted with a young Hungarian who came to live at Neufchâtel, and from that place to Motiers, a few months after I had taken up my residence there. He was called by the people of the country the Baron de Sauttern, by which name he had been recommended from Zurich. He was tall, well made, had an agreeable countenance, and mild and social qualities. He told every one, and gave me also to understand, that he came to Neufchâtel for no other purpose than that of forming his youth to virtue, by his intercourse with me. His physiognomy, manner, and behaviour seemed well suited to his conversation; and I should have thought I failed in one of the greatest duties had I turned my back upon a young man in whom I perceived nothing but what was amiable, and who sought my acquaintance from so respectable a motive. My heart knows not how to show confidence by halves. He soon acquired my friendship and all my trust, and we were presently inseparable. He accompanied me in all my walks, and became fond of them. I took him to my Lord Marshal, who received him with the utmost kindness. As he was yet unable to express himself in French, he spoke and wrote to me in Latin. I answered in French, and this mingling of the two languages did not make our conversations either less smooth or lively in all respects. He spoke of his family, of his affairs, of his adventures, and of the Court of Vienna, with the domestic details of which he seemed well acquainted. In fine, during two years which we passed in the greatest intimacy, I found in him a consistent mildness of character, manners not only polite but elegant, great neatness of person, an extreme decency in his conversation — in a word, all the marks of a well-bred man, which rendered him, in my eyes, too estimable not to make him dear to me.

At the time we were upon the most intimate and friendly terms, D'Ivernois wrote to me from Geneva, putting me upon my guard against the young Hungarian who had taken up his residence in my neighbourhood, telling me he had been assured that he was a spy whom the ministry of France had appointed to observe me. This information was of a nature to alarm me the more, as everybody about me advised me to keep upon my guard, saying that I was watched, and that it was sought to entice me into French territory in order to ruin me.

To shut the mouths, once for all, of these foolish advisers, I proposed to Sauttern, without giving him the least intimation of the information I had received, a journey on foot to Pontarlier, to which he consented. As soon as we had arrived at Pontarlier, I put the letter from D'Ivernois into his hands, and, after giving him an ardent embrace, said: 'Sauttern has no need of a proof of my confidence in him; but it is necessary I should prove to the public that I know in whom to place it.' This embrace was accompanied with a pleasure which persecutors can neither feel themselves, nor take away from the oppressed.

I will never believe that Sauttern was a spy, nor that he betrayed me; but I was deceived by him. When I opened to him my heart without reserve, he was so unfeeling as to keep his own constantly closed, and abused me by lies. He invented I know not what kind of story, to prove to me that his presence was necessary in his own country. I exhorted him to return to it as soon as possible. He set off, and when I thought he was in Hungary, I learned that he was at Strasbourg. This was not the first time he had been there. He had caused some disorder in a household; and the husband, knowing I received him in my house, wrote to me. I had used every effort to bring the young woman back to the paths

of virtue, and Sauttern to his duty. When I thought that they were perfectly detached from each other, they renewed their acquaintance, and the husband even had the complaisance again to receive the young man at his house. From that moment I had nothing more to say. I found that the pretended Baron had imposed upon me by a great number of lies. His name was not Sauttern, but Sauttersheim. With respect to the title of Baron, given him in Switzerland, I could not reproach him with the impropriety, because he had never taken it; but I have not a doubt of his being a gentleman, and my Lord Marshal, who knew mankind, and had been in Hungary, always considered and treated him as such.

He had no sooner gone than the girl at the inn where he boarded, at Motiers, declared herself with child by him. She was such a foul slut, and Sauttern, generally esteemed in the country for his conduct and purity of morals, piqued himself so much upon cleanliness, that everybody was shocked at this impudent pretension. The most pleasing women of the country, who had vainly displayed to him their charms, were furious; I myself was almost choked with indignation. I used every effort to get the tongue of this impudent woman stopped, offering to pay all expenses, and to give security for Sauttersheim. I wrote to him in the fullest persuasion, not only that this pregnancy could not relate to him, but that it was feigned, and the whole a machination of his enemies and mine. I wished him to return and confound the strumpet, and those who set her on. The pusillanimity of his answer surprised me. He wrote to the pastor of the parish to which the creature belonged, and endeavoured to stifle the matter. Perceiving this, I concerned myself no more about it; but I was astonished that a man who could stoop so low should have been sufficiently master of himself to deceive me by his reserve in the closest familiarity.

From Strasbourg, Sauttersheim went to seek his fortune in Paris, and found there nothing but misery. He wrote to me, acknowledging his error. My compassion was excited by the recollection of our former friendship, and I sent him a sum of money. The year following, as I passed through Paris, I saw him much in the same situation, but he was the intimate friend of Monsieur de Laliaud, and I could not learn by what means he had formed this acquaintance, or whether it was recent or of long standing. Two years afterwards Sauttersheim returned to Strasbourg, whence he wrote to me, and where he died. This, in a few words, is the history of our connection, and what I know of his adventures; but, while I mourn the fate of this unhappy young man, I still, and ever shall, believe that he sprang from a good family, and that the impropriety of his conduct was the effect of the situations into which he was thrown.

Such were the connections and acquaintance I acquired at Motiers. How many of these would have been necessary to compensate the cruel losses I suffered at the same time!

The first of these was that of Monsieur de Luxembourg, who, after having long been tormented by the physicians, at length became their victim, by being treated for the gout, which they would not acknowledge him to have, as for a disorder they could cure.

According to what La Roche, the confidential servant of Madame la Maréchale, wrote to me relative to what had happened, it is by this cruel and memorable example that the miseries of greatness are to be deplored.

The loss of this good nobleman affected me the more as he was the only real friend I had in France, and the sweetness of his character was such as to make me quite forget his rank, and attach myself to him as my equal. Our connection was not broken off on account of my

retreat; he continued to write to me as usual. I nevertheless thought that I perceived that absence, or my misfortune, had cooled his affection for me. It is difficult for a courtier to preserve the same attachment to a person whom he knows to be in disgrace with those in power. I moreover suspected that the great ascendancy Madame de Luxembourg had over his mind had been unfavourable to me, and that she had taken advantage of our separation to injure me in his esteem. For her part, notwithstanding a few affected marks of regard, which became less frequent as time went on, she took daily less trouble to conceal the change in her friendship. She wrote to me four or five times while I was in Switzerland, after which she never wrote to me again, and nothing but my preconceived ideas, confidence, and blindness could have prevented my discovering in her something more than a coolness towards me.

Guy, the bookseller, partner with Duchesne, who, after I had departed, frequently went to the Hôtel de Luxembourg, wrote to me that my name was in the will of Monsieur le Maréchal. There was nothing in this either incredible or extraordinary, on which account I had no doubt of the truth of the information. I deliberated within myself as to the way in which I should regard this legacy. Everything well considered, I determined to accept it, whatever it might be, and to do that honour to the memory of an honest man who, in a rank in which friendship is seldom found, had had a real friendship for me. I had not this duty to fulfil. I heard no more of this legacy, whether it were true or false; and in truth I should have felt some pain in offending against one of the great maxims of my system of morality, in profiting by anything at the death of a person whom I had once held dear. During the last illness of our friend Mussard, Lenieps proposed to me to take advantage of the grateful

sense he expressed for our attentions to insinuate to him dispositions in our favour. 'Ah! my dear Lenieps,' said I, 'let us not pollute by interested ideas the sad but sacred duties we discharge towards our dying friend. I hope my name will never be found in the testament of any person, at least not in that of a friend.' It was about this time that my Lord Marshal spoke to me of his, of what he intended to do in it for me, and that I made him the answer of which I have spoken in the First Part.

My second loss, still more afflicting and irreparable, was that of the best of women and of mothers, who, already weighed down with years, and overburdened with infirmities and misery, quitted this vale of tears for the abode of the blessed, where the pleasing remembrance of the good we have done here below is our eternal reward. Go, gentle and beneficent shade, to those of Fénelon, Bernex, Catinat, and others who, in a more humble state, have, like them, opened their hearts to true charity; go and taste of the fruit of your own benevolence, and prepare for your child the place he hopes to fill by your side, happy in your misfortunes that Heaven, in putting a period to them, has spared you the cruel spectacle of his! Fearing lest I should fill her heart with sorrow by the recital of my first disasters, I had not written to her since my arrival in Switzerland, but I wrote to Monsieur de Conzié to inquire after her situation, and it was from him I learned she had ceased to alleviate the sufferings of the afflicted, and that her own were at an end. I myself shall not suffer long; but if I thought I should not see her again in the life to come, my feeble imagination would less delight in the idea of the perfect happiness which I there hope to enjoy.

My third and last loss, for since that time I have not had a friend to lose, was that of my Lord Marshal. He did not die, but, tired of serving the ungrateful, he left

Neufchâtel, and I have never seen him since. He still lives, and will, I hope, survive me: he is alive, and, thanks to him, all my attachments on earth are not destroyed. There is one man still worthy of my friendship; for the real value of this consists more in what we feel than in that which we inspire; but I have lost the pleasure I enjoyed in his, and can only rank him in the number of those whom I yet love, but with whom I am no longer connected. He went to England to receive the pardon of the King, and acquire the possession of his property which formerly had been confiscated. We did not separate without an intention of again being united, the idea of which seemed to give him as much pleasure as I received from it. He determined to reside at his château of Keith Hall, near Aberdeen, and I was to join him there. But this project was too flattering to give me any hope of its success. He did not remain in Scotland. The affectionate solicitations of the King of Prussia induced him to return to Berlin, and the reason of my not going to him there will presently appear.

Before his departure, foreseeing the storm which my enemies began to raise against me, he of his own accord sent me letters of naturalisation, which seemed to be a certain means of preventing me from being driven from the country. The community of Couvet, in the Val-de-Travers, followed the example of the Governor, and gave me letters of communion, gratis, as they were the first. Thus, in every respect, become a citizen, I was sheltered from legal expulsion, even by the prince; but it has never been by legitimate means that the man who, of all others, has ever shown the greatest respect for the laws has been persecuted.

I do not think I ought to enumerate amongst the number of my losses at this time that of the Abbé de Mably. Having lived some time at the house of his

brother, I had been acquainted with the Abbé, but not very intimately, and I have reason to believe that the nature of his sentiments with respect to me changed after I had acquired a greater celebrity than he enjoyed. But the first time I discovered his ill-will was immediately after the publication of the *Lettres de la Montagne.* A letter attributed to him, addressed to Madame Saladin, was handed about in Geneva, in which he spoke of this work as the seditious clamours of a furious demagogue. The esteem I had for the Abbé de Mably, and my great opinion of his understanding, did not permit me to believe for a moment this extravagant letter was written by him. I acted in this business with my usual candour. I sent him a copy of the letter, informing him that he was said to be the author of it. He returned me no answer. This silence astonished me, but what was my surprise when by a communication from Madame de Chenonceaux I learned that the Abbé was really the author of the letter, and found himself greatly embarrassed by mine? For, even supposing that what he stated was true, how could he justify so public an attack, wantonly made, without obligation or necessity, for the sole purpose of overwhelming, in the midst of his greatest misfortunes, a man to whom he had shown himself a well-wisher, and who had not done anything that could excite his enmity? In a short time afterwards appeared the *Dialogues de Phocion,* in which I perceived nothing but a compilation, without shame or restraint, from my writings. In reading this book I perceived the author had made up his mind with regard to me, and that in future I must number him among my most bitter enemies. I do not believe he has ever pardoned me for *Le Contrat Social,* far superior to his abilities, or *La Paix Perpétuelle,* and I am of opinion that the desire he expressed that I should make an extract from the Abbé de Saint-Pierre proceeded from

a supposition that I should not acquit myself of it so well.

The further I advance in my narrative the less order I feel myself capable of observing. The agitation of the rest of my life has deranged in my ideas the succession of events. These are too numerous, confused, and disagreeable to be recited in due order. The only strong impression they have left upon my mind is that of the horrid mystery by which the cause of them is concealed, and of the deplorable state to which they have reduced me. My narrative must in future be irregular, and according to the events which may recur to my recollection. I remember that, about the time to which I refer, full of the idea of my *Confessions*, I very imprudently spoke of them to everybody, never imagining it could be the wish or interest, or within the power, of any person whatsoever to throw an obstacle in the way of this undertaking; and had I suspected it, even this would not have rendered me more discreet, as from the nature of my disposition it is totally impossible for me to conceal either my thoughts or feelings. The knowledge of this enterprise was, as far as I can judge, the true cause of the storm that was raised to drive me from Switzerland, and deliver me into the hands of those by whom I might be prevented from executing it.

I had another project in contemplation which was not looked upon with a more favourable eye by those who were afraid of the first; this was a general edition of my works. I thought this edition of them necessary to ascertain what books, amongst those bearing my name, were really written by me, and to furnish the public with the means of distinguishing them from the writings falsely attributed to me by my enemies, to bring upon me dishonour and contempt. This was, besides, a simple and an honourable means of insuring to myself a livelihood,

and the only one that remained to me. As I had renounced the profession of an author, my memoirs not being of a nature to appear during my lifetime, and as I no longer gained a sou in any other manner, and constantly lived at a certain expense, I saw the end of my resources in that of the produce of the last things I had written. This reason had induced me to hasten the finishing of my *Dictionnaire de Musique*, which still was incomplete. I had received for it a hundred louis, and a life annuity of a hundred écus; but a hundred louis could not last long in the hands of a man who annually expended upwards of sixty, and a hundred écus a year was but a trifling sum to one upon whom idle and beggarly visitors continually alighted like a swarm of flies.

A company of merchants from Neufchâtel came forward to undertake my general edition, and a printer or bookseller named Reguillat, from Lyons, thrust himself, I know not by what means, amongst them to direct it. The agreement was made upon reasonable terms, and sufficient to accomplish my object. I had, in print and manuscript, matter for quarto six volumes. I moreover agreed to supervise the edition. The merchants were, on their part, to pay me a thousand écus down, and to assign me an annuity of sixteen hundred French livres for life.

[1765.] The agreement was concluded, but not signed, when the *Lettres Écrites de la Montagne* appeared. The terrible explosion caused by this infernal work, and its abominable author, terrified the company, and the undertaking was at an end. I would compare the effect of this last production to that of *La Lettre sur la Musique Française*, had not that letter, while it brought upon me hatred and exposed me to danger, acquired me nevertheless respect and esteem. But, after the appearance

of the last work, it was matter of astonishment at Geneva and Versailles that such a monster as I should be suffered to exist. The Petit Conseil, excited by the French Resident and directed by the Procureur-Général, made a declaration against my work, by which, in the most atrocious terms, it was declared unworthy of being burned by the hands of the hangman, adding, with an address which bordered on the burlesque, that there was no possibility of answering, or even mentioning it, without dishonour. I would here transcribe if I could this curious piece, but unfortunately I have it not by me, and cannot recall to mind a word of it. I ardently wish that some one of my readers, animated by the zeal of truth and equity, would read over the *Lettres Écrites de la Montagne*. Such will, I dare hope, feel conscious of the stoical moderation which reigns throughout that work, after all the cruel outrages with which the author was loaded. But, unable to answer the abuse, because no part of it could be called by that name, nor to the reasons, because these were unanswerable, my enemies pretended to appear too angry to reply; and it is true that, if they took the invincible arguments it contains for abuse, they must have felt themselves roughly treated.

The remonstrating party, far from complaining of this odious declaration, followed the track that it marked out, and, instead of making a trophy of the *Lettres de la Montagne*, which they veiled to make them serve as a shield, were pusillanimous enough not to do justice or honour to that work, written to defend them, and at their own solicitation. They did not either cite or mention it, though they tacitly drew from thence all their arguments, and though the exactitude with which they followed the advice with which it concludes has been the sole cause of their safety and triumph. They had

imposed on me this duty: I had fulfilled it, and unto the end had served their cause and the country. I begged of them to abandon me, and, in their quarrels, to think of nobody but themselves. They took me at my word, and I concerned myself no more about their affairs, further than constantly to exhort them to peace, not doubting, should they continue to be obstinate, of their being crushed by France. This, however, did not happen; I know the reason why it did not, but this is not the place to set it forth.

The effect produced at Neufchâtel by the *Lettres de la Montagne* was at first very mild. I sent a copy of them to Monsieur de Montmollin, who received it favourably, and read it without making any objection. He was ill as well as myself; as soon as he recovered he came in a friendly manner to me, and conversed on general subjects. A rumour was, however, beginning; the book was burned I know not where.[1] From Geneva, Berne, and perhaps from Versailles, the effervescence quickly passed to Neufchâtel, and especially to the Val-de-Travers, where, even before the Classe had taken any apparent steps, an attempt had been secretly made to stir up the people. I ought, I dare assert, to have been beloved by the people of that country, as of all others in which I have lived, giving alms in abundance, not leaving about me an indigent person without assistance, never refusing to do any service in my power, and, which was consistent with justice, making myself perhaps too familiar with everybody, and avoiding, as far as it was possible, all distinction which might excite jealousy. This, however, did not prevent the populace, secretly stirred up against me by I know not whom, from being by degrees irritated against me, even to fury, nor from publicly

[1] It was burned at Paris, together with Voltaire's *Dictionnaire Philosophique*, which was included in the same decree, dated March 19, 1765.

insulting me, not only in the country and upon the road, but in the streets of the town. Those to whom I had rendered the greatest services became most embittered against me, and even people who still continued to receive my benefactions, not daring to appear, excited others, and seemed to wish thus to be revenged on me for their humiliation in putting themselves under obligations to me. Montmollin seemed to pay no attention to what was passing, and did not yet come forward; but, as the time of communion approached, he came to advise me not to present myself on the occasion, assuring me, however, that he was not my enemy, and that he would leave me undisturbed. I found this compliment whimsical enough; it brought to my recollection the letter from Madame de Boufflers, and I could not conceive to whom it could be a matter of such importance whether I communicated or not. Considering this condescension on my part as an act of cowardice, and, moreover, being unwilling to give to the people a new pretence under which they might charge me with impiety, I refused the request of the minister, and he went away dissatisfied, giving me to understand that I should repent of my resolve.

He could not of his own authority forbid me the communion; that of the Consistory, by which I had been admitted to it, was necessary, and as long as there was no objection from the Consistory I might present myself confidently without the fear of being refused. Montmollin procured from the Classe a commission to summon me to the Consistory, there to give an account of my belief, and to excommunicate me should I refuse to comply. This excommunication could not be pronounced without the aid of the Consistory also, and a majority of the votes. But the peasants who, under the appellation of elders, composed this assembly, presided over and —

as may be supposed — governed by their minister, might naturally be expected to adopt his opinion, especially in matters of theology, which they still less understood than he did. I was therefore cited, and I resolved to appear.

What a happy circumstance and triumph would this have been to me could I have spoken, and had I, if I may say so, had my pen in my mouth! With what superiority, with what facility even, should I have overthrown this poor minister in the midst of his six peasants! The thirst after power having made the Protestant clergy forget all the principles of the Reformation, all I had to do to recall these to their recollection and reduce them to silence was to comment upon my first *Lettres de la Montagne*, respecting which they had the folly to censure me. My text was ready, and I had only to enlarge on it, and my adversary was confounded. I should not have been weak enough to remain on the defensive; it was easy to me to become an assailant without his even perceiving it, or being able to shelter himself from my attack. The contemptible priests of the Classe, equally careless and ignorant, had of themselves placed me in the most favourable situation I could desire to crush them at pleasure. But what of this? It was necessary that I should speak — speak without hesitation — and find ideas, turns of expression, and words at the right moment, preserving a presence of mind, and keeping myself collected, without once suffering even a momentary confusion. For what could I hope, feeling, as I did, my want of aptitude to express myself with ease? I had been reduced to the most mortifying silence at Geneva, before an assembly which was favourable to me, and predetermined to approve of everything I should say. Here, on the contrary, I had to do with a caviller who, substituting cunning for knowledge, would spread for me a hundred snares before I could perceive one of them,

and was fully resolved to catch me in an error, let the consequence be what it would. The more I examined the situation in which I stood, the greater danger I perceived myself exposed to, and, feeling the impossibility of success, I thought of another expedient. I meditated a discourse which I intended to pronounce before the Consistory, rejecting their authority, and exempting myself from the need of answering. The thing was easy. I wrote the discourse and began to learn it by heart, with an inconceivable ardour. Thérèse laughed at hearing me mutter and incessantly repeat the same phrases, while endeavouring to cram them into my head. I hoped at length that I could remember what I had written. I knew that the Châtelain, as an officer attached to the service of the Prince, would be present at the Consistory, and that, notwithstanding the manœuvres and bottles of Montmollin, most of the elders were well disposed towards me. I had moreover in my favour reason, truth, and justice, with the protection of the King, the authority of the Council of State, and the good wishes of every real patriot, to whom the establishment of this inquisition was threatening. In fine, everything contributed to encourage me.

On the eve of the day appointed I had my discourse by rote, and recited it without missing a word. I had it in my head all night; in the morning I had forgotten it. I hesitated at every word, thought myself before the illustrious assembly, became confused, stammered, and lost my presence of mind. In fine, when the time to make my appearance was almost at hand my courage to tally failed me. I remained at home and wrote to the Consistory, hastily stating my reasons, and pleaded my disorder, which really, in the state in which I then was, would scarcely have permitted me to stay out the whole sitting.

The minister, embarrassed by my letter, adjourned

the business to a future session. In the interval he, of himself and by his creatures, made a thousand efforts to seduce those elders who, following the dictates of their own consciences rather than those they received from him, did not vote according to his wishes or those of the Classe. Whatever power arguments drawn from his cellar might have over people of this kind, he could not gain one of them beyond the two or three who were already devoted to his will, and who were called his *âmes damnées*. The officer of the Prince and Colonel de Pury, who in this affair acted with great zeal, kept the rest to their duty, and when Montmollin wished to proceed to excommunication, his Consistory, by a majority of voices, flatly refused to authorise him to do it. Thus reduced to the last expedient, that of stirring up the people against me, he, his colleagues, and other persons set about it openly, and were so successful that, notwithstanding the emphatic and frequent rescripts of the King and the orders of the Council of State, I was at length obliged to quit the country, that I might not expose the officer of the Prince to be himself assassinated while he protected me.

My recollection of the whole of this affair is so confused that it is impossible for me to reduce to order or connect the circumstances that recur to me: I can only relate them in a fragmentary way, as they present themselves to my mind. I remember a kind of negotiation that had been entered into with the Classe, in which Montmollin was the mediator. He feigned to believe that it was feared I should by my writings disturb the peace of the country, in which case my liberty of writing would be attacked. He had given me to understand that if I consented to lay down my pen what was past would be overlooked. I had already entered into this engagement with myself, and did not hesitate in doing it with

the Classe, but conditionally, and solely in matters of religion. He found means to have a duplicate of this agreement, upon some change necessary to be made in it; the condition having been rejected by the Classe, I demanded back the writing, which was returned to me; but he kept the duplicate, pretending it was lost. After this the people, openly excited by the ministers, laughed at the rescripts of the King and the orders of the Council of State, and shook off all restraint. I was declaimed against from the pulpit, called Antichrist, and pursued in the country like a mad wolf. My Armenian dress discovered me to the populace; of this I felt the cruel inconvenience, but to quit it in such circumstances appeared to me an act of cowardice. I could not prevail upon myself to do it, and I quietly walked through the country with my caftan and furred bonnet in the midst of the hootings of the dregs of the people, and sometimes through a shower of stones. Several times, as I passed before houses, I heard the residents call out, 'Bring me my gun, that I may fire at him.' As I did not on this account hasten my pace my calmness increased their fury, but they never went farther than threats, at least as respects fire-arms.

During this fermentation I received from two circumstances the most sensible pleasure. The first was my having it in my power to prove my gratitude by means of my Lord Marshal. The honest folk amongst the inhabitants of Neufchâtel, full of indignation at the treatment I received and the manœuvres of which I was the victim, held the ministers in execration, clearly perceiving that they obeyed a foreign impulse, and were the satellites of people who, in making them act, kept themselves concealed; they moreover feared lest my example would have dangerous consequences, and be made a precedent for the establishing of a real inquisi-

tion. The magistrates, and especially Monsieur Meuron, who had succeeded Monsieur d'Ivernois in the office of Procureur-Général, made every effort to defend me. Colonel de Pury, although a private individual, did more, and succeeded better. It was he who found means to make Montmollin submit in his Consistory, by keeping the elders to their duty. He had credit, and employed it to his utmost to stop the sedition, but he had nothing more than the authority of the laws and the aid of justice and reason to oppose to that of money and wine: the combat was unequal, and in this point Montmollin was triumphant. However, thankful for his zeal and services, I wished to have it in my power to make him a return of good offices, and in some measure discharge my obligations to him. I knew he was very desirous of being named a Counsellor of State, but, having displeased the Court by his conduct in the affair of the minister Petitpierre, he was in disgrace with the Prince and Governor. I ventured, however, to write to the Lord Marshal in his favour; I went so far as even to mention the employment of which he was desirous, and my application was so well received that, contrary to general expectation, it was instantly conferred upon him by the King. In this manner, fate, which has constantly placed me at one and the same time too high and too low, continued to toss me from one extreme to another, and, whilst the populace pelted me with mud, I was able to create a Counsellor of State.

The other very pleasing circumstance was a visit that I received from Madame de Verdelin, with her daughter, with whom she had been at the baths of Bourbonne, whence they came as far as Motiers and stayed with me two or three days. By her attention and services she had at length conquered my long repugnancy; and my heart, won by her endearing manner, made her a return

of all the friendship of which she had long given me proofs. This journey made me extremely sensible of her kindness, for my situation at the time rendered the consolations of friendship highly necessary to support me under my sufferings. I was afraid lest she would be too much affected by the insults that I received from the populace, and could have wished to conceal them from her, that her feelings might not be hurt; but this was impossible; and, although her presence was some check upon the insolent populace in our walks, she saw sufficient to enable her to judge of what passed at other times. It was, indeed, during her short residence at Motiers that I was first attacked in my own house. One morning her chambermaid found my window blocked up with stones, which had been thrown at it during the night. A very heavy bench, placed in the street by the side of the entrance and strongly fastened down, was taken up and reared against the door in such a manner as — had it not been perceived from the window — to have knocked down the first person who should have opened the door to go out. Madame de Verdelin was acquainted with everything that passed, for, besides what she herself was witness to, her confidential servant went into many houses in the village, spoke to everybody, and was seen in conversation with Montmollin himself. She did not, however, seem to pay the least attention to that which happened to me, nor ever mentioned Montmollin nor any other person, and answered in few words to what I sometimes said to her respecting him. Seeming to be fully persuaded that a residence in England would be more suitable to me than elsewhere, she frequently spoke of Mr. Hume, who was then in Paris, of his friendship for me, and the desire he had of being of service to me in his own country. It is time I should say something of Mr. Hume.

He had acquired a great reputation in France, especially amongst the Encyclopædists, by his essays on commerce and politics, and in the last place by his history of the House of Stuart, the only one of his writings of which I had read a part, in the translation of the Abbé Prévost. For want of being acquainted with his other works I was persuaded, according to what I heard of him, that Mr. Hume joined a very republican mind to the English paradoxes in favour of luxury. Holding this opinion, I considered his whole apology of Charles I as a prodigy of impartiality, and I had as great an idea of his virtue as of his genius. The desire of being acquainted with this distinguished man, and of obtaining his friendship, had greatly strengthened the inclination I felt to go to England, induced by the solicitations of Madame de Boufflers, the intimate friend of Mr. Hume. After my arrival in Switzerland I received from him, by means of this lady, a letter extremely flattering, in which, to the highest encomiums on my genius, he subjoined a pressing invitation to go to England, and the offer of all his interest, and that of his friends, to make my residence there agreeable. I found in the country to which I had retired my Lord Marshal, the countryman and friend of Hume, who confirmed my good opinion of him, and from whom I learned a literary anecdote, which had made a great impression on his lordship, and had the same effect on me. Wallace, who had written against Hume upon the subject of the population of the ancients, was absent whilst his work was in the press. Hume took upon himself to examine the proofs, and to superintend the publication. This manner of acting was according to my own way of thinking. In the same way I had sold at six sous apiece copies of a song written against myself. I was therefore strongly prejudiced in favour of Hume, when Madame de Verdelin came and spoke warmly of the

friendship he professed for me, and his anxiety to do me the honours of England — such was her expression. She pressed me a good deal to take advantage of this zeal and to write to Mr. Hume. As I had not naturally any liking for England, and did not intend to go there until the last extremity, I refused to write or make any promise; but I left her at liberty to do whatever she should think necessary to keep Mr. Hume favourably disposed towards me. When she went from Motiers she left me in the persuasion, by everything she had said to me of that illustrious man, that he was my friend, and she herself still more his.

After her departure Montmollin carried on his manœuvres with more vigour, and the populace threw off all restraint; yet I still continued to walk quietly amidst the hootings of the vulgar; and a taste for botany, which I had begun to contract with Doctor d'Ivernois, making my rambles more amusing, I went through the country herborising, without being affected by the clamours of this vile herd, whose fury was augmented by my calmness. What affected me most was seeing the families of my friends,[1] or of persons who gave themselves that title, openly join the league of my persecutors; such as the D'Ivernois, without excepting the father and brother of my Isabelle, Boy de La Tour, a relation of the friend in

[1] This fatality had begun with my residence at Yverdun. The Banneret Roguin dying a year or two after my departure from that city, old Papa Roguin had the candour to inform me with grief, as he said, that in the papers of his relation proofs had been found of his having been concerned in the conspiracy to expel me from Yverdun and the State of Berne. This clearly proved the conspiracy not to be, as some persons would have it thought, an affair of religious hypocrisy, since the Banneret, far from being a devotee, carried materialism and incredulity to intolerance and fanaticism. Besides, nobody at Yverdun had shown me more constant attention, nor more prodigally bestowed upon me praises and flattery, than this Banneret Roguin. He faithfully followed the favourite plan of my persecutors. — R.

whose house I lodged; and Madame Girardier, her sister-in-law. This Pierre Boy was such a brute, so stupid, and behaved so uncouthly, that, to prevent my mind from being disturbed, I took the liberty to ridicule him; and, after the manner of the *Petit Prophète*, I wrote a pamphlet of a few pages, entitled *La Vision de Pierre de la Montagne, dit le Voyant*, in which I found means to be diverting enough on the miracles which then served as the great pretext for my persecution. Du Peyrou had this scrap printed at Geneva, but its success in the country was but moderate; the Neufchâtelois, with all their wit, taste but weakly Attic salt or pleasantry when these are a little refined.

When the tempest of decrees and persecutions was at its height, the Genevese had distinguished themselves by setting up a hue and cry with all their might; and my friend Vernes, amongst others, with a truly theologic generosity, chose that precise moment to publish against me letters, in which he pretended to prove that I was not a Christian. These letters, written with an air of self-sufficiency, were not the better for it, although it was positively said that the naturalist Bonnet had given them some correction; for this man, although a materialist, has an intolerant orthodoxy the moment I am in question. I felt no temptation to answer this work, but having an opportunity of saying a few words upon it in my *Lettres de la Montagne*, I inserted therein a short note sufficiently expressive of disdain to render Vernes furious. He filled Geneva with his furious exclamations, and D'Ivernois wrote me word that he had quite lost his senses. Some time afterwards appeared an anonymous sheet, which, instead of ink, seemed to be written with the water of Phlegethon. In this letter I was accused of having exposed my children to the streets, of taking about with me a soldier's trull, of being worn out with debaucheries,

rotten with disease, and other pretty things of a like nature. It was not difficult for me to discover the author. My first idea on reading this libel was to reduce to its real value everything the world calls fame and reputation amongst men; seeing thus a man who was never in a brothel in his life, and whose greatest defect was his being timid and shy as a virgin, treated as a frequenter of places of that description, and in finding myself charged with the infection of a shameful malady, I, who not only never had the least taint of such disorder, but, according to the faculty, was so constituted as to make it almost impossible for me to contract it. Everything well considered, I thought I could not better refute this libel than by having it printed in the city in which I had longest resided, and with this intention I sent it to Duchesne to print it as it was with an advertisement, in which I named Monsieur Vernes, and a few short notes by way of explanation. Not satisfied with printing it only, I sent copies to several persons, and amongst others one copy to Monsieur le Prince Louis de Wirtemberg, who had made me polite advances, and with whom I was in correspondence. This Prince, Du Peyrou, and others seemed to have their doubts about the author of the libel, and blamed me for having named Vernes upon so slight a foundation. Their remarks produced in me some scruples, and I wrote to Duchesne to suppress the paper. Guy wrote that he had suppressed it. This may or may not be the case; I have found him to be a liar on so many occasions that there would be nothing extraordinary on his being so on this, and, from the time of which I speak, I was so enveloped in profound darkness that it was impossible for me to come at any kind of truth.

Monsieur Vernes bore the imputation with a moderation more than astonishing in a man who was supposed not to have deserved it, and after the fury with which

he was seized on former occasions. He wrote me two or three letters in very guarded terms, with a view, as it appeared to me, to endeavour by my answers to discover how far my information extended, and whether I had any proofs against him. I wrote him two short answers, severe in the sense, but politely expressed, and with which he was not displeased. To his third letter, perceiving that he wished to form with me a kind of correspondence, I returned no answer, and he got D'Ivernois to speak to me. Madame Cramer wrote to Du Peyrou, telling him she was certain that the libel was not by Vernes. All this, however, did not make me change my opinion; but as it was possible I might be deceived, and as it is certain that if I were I owed Vernes an explicit reparation, I sent him word by D'Ivernois that I would make him such a one as he should think proper, provided he would name to me the real author of the libel, or at least prove that he himself was not so. I went farther: feeling that, after all, were he not culpable, I had no right to call upon him for proofs of any kind, I stated, in a memoir of considerable length, the reasons whence I had inferred my conclusion, and determined to submit them to the judgment of an arbitrator, against whom Vernes could not except. But few people would guess the arbitrator of whom I made choice — the Council of Geneva. I declared at the end of the memoir that if, after having examined it and made such inquiries as should seem necessary, the Council pronounced Monsieur Vernes not to be the author of the libel, from that moment I should be fully persuaded he was not, and would immediately go and throw myself at his feet, and ask his pardon until I had obtained it. I can say with the greatest truth that my ardent zeal for equity, the uprightness and generosity of my heart, and my confidence in the love of justice innate in every mind, never appeared

more fully and perceptibly than in this judicious and interesting memoir, in which I took, without hesitating, my most implacable enemies for arbitrators between a calumniator and myself. I read to Du Peyrou what I had written. He advised me to suppress it, and I did so. He counselled me to wait for the proofs promised by Vernes; I waited for them, and am waiting still. He thought it best that I should in the meantime be silent, and hold my tongue; I became silent, and shall be so for the rest of my life, censured as I am for having brought against Vernes a heavy imputation, false and unsupported by proof, although I am still fully persuaded — nay, as convinced as I am of my existence — that he is the author of the libel. My memoir is in the hands of Monsieur du Peyrou. Should it ever be published, my reasons will be found in it, and the heart of Jean-Jacques, with which my contemporaries were so unwilling to be acquainted, will, I hope, be known.

I have now to proceed to my catastrophe at Motiers, and to my departure from the Val-de-Travers after a residence of two years and a half, and eight months' suffering with unshaken constancy of the most unworthy treatment. It is impossible for me clearly to recollect the circumstances of this disagreeable period, but a detail of them will be found in a publication to that effect by Du Peyrou, of which I shall hereafter have occasion to speak.

After the departure of Madame de Verdelin the fermentation increased, and, notwithstanding the reiterated rescripts of the King, the frequent orders of the Council of State, and the attention given to the matter by the Châtelain and magistrates of the place, the people, seriously considering me as Antichrist, and perceiving all their clamours to be of no effect, seemed at length determined to proceed to violence: stones were already thrown

after me on the roads; I was, however, in general at too great a distance to receive any harm from them. At last, on the night of the fair of Motiers, which is in the beginning of September, I was attacked in my house in such a manner as to endanger the lives of the inhabitants.

At midnight I heard a great noise in the gallery which ran along the back part of the house. A shower of pebbles thrown against the window and the door which opened to the gallery fell into it with so much noise and violence that my dog, which usually slept there and had begun to bark, ceased through fright, and ran into a corner, gnawing and scratching the planks in endeavouring to make his escape. I immediately rose, and was preparing to go from my chamber into the kitchen, when a stone thrown by a vigorous arm crossed the latter after having broken the window, forced open the door of my chamber, and fell at the foot of my bed, so that had I been a moment sooner I should have had the stone against my stomach. I judged that the noise had been made to bring me to the door, and the stone thrown to receive me as I went out. I ran into the kitchen, where I found Thérèse, who also had risen and was tremblingly making her way to me as fast as she could. We placed ourselves against the wall out of the direction of the window, to avoid the stones and deliberate upon what was best to be done, for going out to call assistance was the certain means of getting ourselves knocked on the head. Fortunately the maid-servant of an old man who lodged under me was waked by the noise, and got up and ran to call Monsieur le Châtelain, whose house was next to mine. He jumped from his bed, hastily put on his *robe de chambre*, and instantly came to me with the guard, which, on account of the fair, went the round that night, and was just at hand. The Châtelain was so alarmed at the sight of the disorder and damage that he turned pale, and

on seeing the stones in the gallery exclaimed, 'Good God! here is a quarry!' On examining belowstairs, the door of a little court was found to have been forced, and there was an appearance of an attempt having been made to get into the house by the gallery. On inquiring the reason why the guard had neither prevented nor perceived the disturbance, it came out that the guards of Motiers had insisted upon doing duty that night, although it was the turn of those of another village. The next day the Châtelain sent his report to the Council of State, which two days afterwards sent an order to inquire into the affair, to promise a reward and secrecy to those who should impeach such as were guilty, and in the meantime to place at the expense of the King guards about my house, and that of the Châtelain, which joined to it. The day after the disturbance Colonel de Pury, the Procureur-général Meuron, the Châtelain Martinet, the Receiver Guyenet, the Treasurer d'Ivernois and his father — in a word, every person of consequence in the country came to see me, and united their solicitations to persuade me to yield to the storm and leave, at least for a time, a place in which I could no longer live in safety nor with honour. I perceived that even the Châtelain was frightened at the fury of the people, and apprehending it might extend to himself, would be glad to see me depart as soon as possible, that he might no longer have the trouble of protecting me there, and be able to quit the parish, which he did after my departure. I therefore yielded to their solicitations, and, indeed, without much reluctance, for the spectacle of the people's hatred so afflicted my heart that I was no longer able to support it.[1]

[1] This 'lapidation,' of which Rousseau furnishes such minute details that one can scarcely suppose them to be imaginary, has nevertheless been called in question, and those who dispute its reality have also some claim to belief. Monsieur Servan tells us that he was informed by a man in whom he could trust, and who had visited Rousseau on the following

I had a choice of places to retire to. After Madame de Verdelin returned to Paris she had in several letters mentioned a Mr. Walpole, whom she called 'milord,' who, having a strong desire to serve me, proposed to me an asylum at one of his country-houses, of the situation of which she gave me the most agreeable description, entering, relative to lodging and subsistence, into a detail which proved she and my Lord Walpole had held particular consultations upon the project. My Lord Marshal had always advised me to go to England or Scotland, and had offered me an asylum on his estates. But he offered me another at Potsdam, near to his person, and which tempted me more than all the rest. He had just communicated to me what the King had said to him respecting myself, which was a kind of invitation to go thither, and the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha depended so much upon my taking the journey that she wrote to me desiring that I would go to see her on my way, and stay some time before I proceeded farther; but I was so attached to Switzerland that I could not resolve to quit it so long as it was possible for me to live there, and I seized this opportunity to execute a project of which I had for several months conceived the idea, and of which I have deferred speaking that I might not interrupt my narrative.

This project consisted in going to reside in the Île de Saint-Pierre, an estate belonging to the Hospital of Berne, in the middle of the lake of Bienne. In the pedestrian pilgrimage I had made in the preceding year with Du Peyrou we had visited this isle, with which I was so much delighted that I had since that time incessantly thought of the means of making it my place of residence. The greatest obstacle to my wishes arose from the

day, that the apertures made in the glass were smaller than the pebbles found on the floor; and he perceived in the incident a scheme devised by the *gouvernante* to force her master to quit a country that she disliked.

property of the island being vested in the people of Berne, who three years before had ignominiously driven me from amongst them; and, besides the mortification of returning to live with people who had given me so unfavourable a reception, I had reason to fear that they would leave me no more at peace in the island than they had done at Yverdun. I had consulted my Lord Marshal upon the subject, who, thinking as I did that the people of Berne would be glad to see me banished to this island, and to keep me there as a hostage for the works I might be tempted to write, had sounded their dispositions by means of Monsieur Sturler, his old neighbour at Colombier. Monsieur Sturler addressed himself to the chiefs of the State, and according to their answer assured my Lord Marshal that the Bernese, sorry for their past behaviour, wished nothing better than to see me settled in the Île de Saint-Pierre, and to leave me there at peace. As an additional precaution, before I determined to reside there, I requested Colonel Chaillet to make new inquiries. He confirmed what I had already heard, and, the receiver of the island having obtained from his superiors permission to lodge me in it, I thought I might without danger go to his house, with the tacit consent of the Sovereign and the proprietors, for I could not expect that the people of Berne would openly acknowledge the injustice they had done me, and thus act contrary to the most inviolable maxim of all Sovereigns.

The Île de Saint-Pierre, called at Neufchâtel the Île de La Motte, in the middle of the Lake of Bienne, is half a league in circumference, but in this little space all the chief productions necessary to subsistence are found. The island has fields, meadows, orchards, woods, and vineyards; and all these, favoured by variegated and mountainous situations, form a distribution the more agreeable, as the different parts, not being discovered all

at once, are seen successively to advantage, and make the island appear greater than it really is. A very elevated terrace forms the western part of it, and commands Gleresse and Bonneville. This terrace is planted with trees which form a long alley, interrupted in the middle by a great saloon, in which, during the vintage, the people from the neighbouring shores assemble on Sundays to dance and enjoy themselves. There is but one house in the whole island, but that is very spacious and convenient, inhabited by the receiver, and situated in a hollow by which it is sheltered from the winds.

Five or six hundred paces to the south is another island, considerably less than the former, wild and uncultivated, which appears to have been detached from the greater isle by storms; its gravelly soil produces nothing but willows and persicaria, but there is in it a high hill well covered with greensward and very pleasant. The form of the lake is an almost regular oval. The banks, less rich than those of the Lake of Geneva and of Neufchâtel, form a beautiful setting for the picture, especially towards the western part, which is well peopled, and edged at the foot of a chain of mountains with vineyards something like those of Côte-Rôtie, but which do not produce such excellent wine. One passes, in going from south to north, the bailliage de Saint-Jean, Bonneville, Bienne, and Nidau at the extremity of the lake, the whole interspersed with very agreeable villages.

Such was the asylum I had prepared for myself, and to which I was determined to retire after quitting the Val-de-Travers.[1] This choice was so agreeable to my peace-

[1] It may perhaps be desirable to remark that I left there a particular enemy in one Monsieur du Terraux, Mayor of Les Verrières, not much esteemed in the country, but who has a brother, said to be an honest man, in the office of Monsieur de Saint-Florentin. The Mayor had been to see him some time before my adventure. Little remarks of this kind, though of no consequence in themselves, may lead to the discovery of many underhand dealings. — R.

ful intention and my solitary and indolent disposition that I consider it as one of the pleasing reveries of which I became most passionately fond. It seemed that I should in that island be more separated from men, more sheltered from their outrages, and sooner forgotten by mankind — in a word, more abandoned to the delightful pleasures of inaction and a contemplative life. I could have wished to be confined in it in such a manner as to have no intercourse with mortals, and I certainly took every measure I could imagine to relieve me from the necessity of troubling my head about them.

The great question was that of subsistence: owing to the dearness of provisions and the difficulty of carriage this is expensive in the island; the inhabitants are besides at the mercy of the receiver. This difficulty was removed by an arrangement which Du Peyrou made with me in becoming a substitute for the company which had undertaken and abandoned my general edition. I gave him all the materials necessary, and made the proper arrangement and distribution. To the engagement between us I added that of giving him the memoirs of my life, and made him the general depositary of all my papers under the express condition of making no use of them until after my death, having it at heart quietly to end my days without doing anything which should bring me back to the recollection of the public. The life annuity he undertook to pay me in return was sufficient for my subsistence. My Lord Marshal, having recovered all his property, had offered me twelve hundred francs a year, one-half of which only I would accept. He wished to send me the principal, but this I refused on account of the difficulty of placing it. He then sent the amount to Du Peyrou, in whose hands it remained, and who pays me the annuity according to the terms agreed upon with his lordship. Adding therefore the result of my agree-

ment with Du Peyrou to the annuity of the Marshal, two-thirds of which were to revert to Thérèse after my death, and the annuity of three hundred francs from Duchesne, I was assured of a fair subsistence for myself, and after me for Thérèse, to whom I left seven hundred francs a year, from the annuities paid me by Rey and my Lord Marshal. I had therefore no longer to fear a want of bread on her part or my own. But it was ordained that honour should oblige me to reject all the resources which fortune and my labours placed within my reach, and that I should die as poor as I had lived. It will be seen whether, without reducing myself to the last degree of infamy, I could abide by those engagements which have always been carefully rendered ignominious, by depriving me of every other resource in order to force me to consent to my own dishonour. How could anyone doubt of the choice I should make in such an alternative? Others have judged of my heart by their own.

My mind, at ease relative to subsistence, was without care upon every other subject. Although I left in the world the field open to my enemies, there remained in the noble enthusiasm by which my writings were dictated, and in the constant uniformity of my principles, an evidence of the uprightness of my heart, which answered to that deducible from my conduct in favour of my natural disposition. I had no need of any other defence against my calumniators. They might under my name describe another man, but they could only deceive such as were willing to be imposed upon. I could have given them my whole life to animadvert upon, with a certainty, notwithstanding all my faults and weaknesses, and my want of aptitude to support the lightest yoke, of their finding me in every situation a just and good man, without bitterness, hatred, or jealousy, ready to acknowledge my faults, and still more prompt to for-

get those of others, seeking all my happiness in love, friendship, and affection, and in everything carrying my sincerity to imprudence, even to the most incredible disinterestedness.

I therefore in some measure took leave of the age in which I lived, and of my contemporaries, and bade adieu to the world, with an intention to confine myself for the rest of my days to this island; such was my resolution, and it was there I hoped to execute the great project of the indolent life to which I had until then ineffectually consecrated the little activity with which heaven had endowed me. The island was to become to me that of Papimanie,[1] that happy country where the inhabitants sleep —

'On y fait plus, on n'y fait nulle chose.'

This *more* was everything for me, for I never much regretted sleep; indolence is sufficient to my happiness, and provided I do nothing I had rather dream waking than asleep. Being past the age of romantic projects, and having been more stunned than flattered by the trumpet of fame, my only hope was that of living at ease and eternally at leisure. This is the life of the blessed in the world to come, and for the rest of mine here below I made it my supreme happiness.

They who reproach me with so many contradictions will not fail here to add another to the number. I have observed that the indolence of fashionable circles made them insupportable to me, and I am now seeking solitude for the sole purpose of abandoning myself to indolence. This, however, is my disposition; if there be in it a contradiction, it proceeds from nature and not from me; but there is so little that it is precisely on that account that I am always consistent. The indolence of

[1] La Fontaine, *Le Diable de Papefiguière.*

company is burdensome because it is forced; that of solitude is charming because it is free, and depends upon the will. In company I suffer cruelly by inaction, because this is a necessity. I must there remain nailed to my chair, or stand upright like a picket without stirring hand or foot, not daring to run, jump, sing, exclaim, or gesticulate when I please, not allowed even to dream, suffering at once all the fatigue of inaction and all the torment of constraint; obliged to pay attention to every foolish thing uttered, and to all the idle compliments paid, and constantly to keep my mind upon the rack that I may not fail to introduce in my turn my jest or my lie. And this is called idleness! It is the labour of a galley-slave.

The indolence I love is not that of a lazy fellow who sits with his arms folded in total inaction, and thinks no more than he acts: it is at one and the same time that of a child who is incessantly in motion doing nothing, and that of a dotard who wanders from his subject while his limbs are at rest. I love to amuse myself with trifles, in beginning a hundred things and never finishing one of them, in going and coming as I take either into my head, in changing my project at every instant, in following a fly through all its windings, in wishing to overturn a rock to see what is under it, in undertaking with ardour the work of ten years and abandoning it without regret at the end of ten minutes; finally, in musing from morning until night without order or coherence, and in following in everything the caprice of the moment.

Botany, such as I have always considered it, and of which after my own manner I began to become passionately fond, was precisely an idle study proper to fill up the void of my leisure without leaving room for the delirium of imagination or the weariness of total inaction. Carelessly wandering in the woods and the country, mechanically gathering here a flower and there a branch,

browsing almost by chance, observing a thousand and a thousand times the same things, and always with the same interest, because I always forgot them, were to me the means of passing an eternity without a weary moment. However elegant, admirable, and variegated the structure of plants may be, it does not strike an ignorant eye sufficiently to fix the attention. The constant analogy, with at the same time the prodigious variety, which reigns in their conformation gives pleasure to those only who have already some idea of the vegetable system. Others, at the sight of these treasures of nature, feel nothing more than a stupid and monotonous wonder. They see nothing in detail because they know not for what they look, nor do they perceive the whole, having no idea of the chain of connection and combinations which overwhelms with its marvels the mind of the observer. I was arrived at that happy point of knowledge — and my want of memory was such as constantly to keep me there — that I knew little enough to make the whole new to me, and sufficient to make me sensible of all. The different soils into which the island, although small, was divided offered a sufficient variety of plants for the study and amusement of my whole life. I was determined not to leave a blade of grass without analysing it, and I began already to take measures for making, with an immense collection of curious observations, the *Flora Petrinsularis.*

I sent for Thérèse, who brought with her my books and effects. We boarded with the receiver of the island. His wife had sisters at Nidau who by turns came to see her, and were company for Thérèse. I here made the experiment of the agreeable life which I could have wished to continue, and the pleasure I found in it only served to make me feel to a greater degree the bitterness of that by which it was shortly to be succeeded.

I have ever been passionately fond of water, and the sight of it throws me into a delightful reverie, although frequently without a determinate object. Immediately after I rose from my bed I never failed, if the weather was fine, to run to the terrace to breathe the fresh and salubrious air of the morning, and gaze upon the horizon of this beautiful lake, bounded by banks and mountains delightful to the view. I know no homage more worthy of the Divinity than the silent admiration excited by the contemplation of his works, and which is not externally expressed. I can easily comprehend the reason why the inhabitants of cities, who see nothing but walls, streets, and crimes, have but little faith, but not whence it happens that people in the country, and especially such as live in solitude, can be without it. How comes it to pass that these do not a hundred times a day elevate their souls in ecstasy to the Author of the wonders which strike their senses? For my part, it is especially at rising, wearied by a want of sleep, that long habit inclines me to this elevation, which imposes not the fatigue of thinking. But to this effect my eyes must be struck with the ravishing spectacle of nature. In my chamber I pray less frequently, and less fervently, but at the view of a fine landscape I feel myself moved, yet by what I am unable to tell. I have somewhere read of a wise bishop who, in a visit to his diocese, found an old woman whose only prayer consisted in the single interjection 'Oh!' 'Good mother,' said he to her, 'continue always to pray thus. Your prayer is better than ours.' This better prayer is mine also.

After breakfast I hastened, with a frown on my brow, to write a few pitiful letters, longing ardently for the moment after which I should have no more to write. I busied myself for a few minutes about my books and papers, to unpack and arrange them, rather than to read

what they contained, and this arrangement, which to me became the work of Penelope, gave me the pleasure of musing for a while. I then grew weary, and quitted my books to spend the three or four hours which remained to me of the morning in the study of botany, and especially of the system of Linnæus, of which I became so passionately fond that, after having felt how useless my attachment to it was, I yet could not entirely shake it off. This great observer is, in my opinion, the only one who, with Ludwig, has hitherto considered botany in the spirit of a naturalist and a philosopher; but he has too much studied it in herbaria and gardens, and not sufficiently in Nature herself. For my part, whose garden was always the whole island, the moment I wanted to make or verify an observation I ran into the woods or meadows with my book under my arm, and there laid myself upon the ground near the plant in question, to examine it at my ease as it stood. This method was of great service to me in gaining a knowledge of vegetables in their natural state, before they had been cultivated and changed in their nature by the hands of men. Fagon, first physician to Louis XIV, and who named and perfectly knew all the plants in the Jardin-Royal, is said to have been so ignorant in the country as not to know how to distinguish the same plants. I am precisely the contrary: I know something of the work of nature, but nothing of that of the gardener.

I gave up every afternoon wholly to my indolent and careless disposition, and to following without regularity the impulse of the moment. When the weather was calm I frequently went, immediately after I rose from dinner, and alone got into a little boat, which the receiver had taught me to row with one oar. I rowed out into the middle of the lake. The moment I withdrew from the bank I felt a secret joy which almost made me leap, and

of which it is impossible for me to tell or even comprehend the cause, if it were not a secret congratulation on my being out of the reach of the wicked. I afterwards rowed about the lake, sometimes approaching the opposite bank but never touching at it. I often let my boat float at the mercy of the wind and water, abandoning myself to reveries without object, and which were not the less agreeable for their stupidity. I sometimes fondly exclaimed, 'O Nature! O my mother! I am here under thy guardianship alone; here is no deceitful and cunning mortal to interfere between me and thee.' In this manner I withdrew half a league from land. I could have wished the lake had been the ocean. However, to please my poor dog, who was not so fond as I was of such a long stay on the water, I commonly followed one constant course; this was, going to land at the smaller island, where I walked an hour or two, or laid myself down on the grass on the summit of the hill, there to satiate myself with the pleasure of admiring the lake and its environs, to examine and dissect all the herbs within my reach, and, like another Robinson, build myself an imaginary dwelling in the little island. I became very much attached to this eminence. When I brought Thérèse, with the wife of the receiver and her sisters, to walk there, how proud was I to be their pilot and guide! We made a ceremony of taking rabbits thither to people it — another source of pleasure to Jean-Jacques. These animals rendered the little island still more interesting to me. I afterwards went to it more frequently, and with greater pleasure, to observe the signs of progress among the new inhabitants.

To these amusements I added one which recalled to my recollection the delightful life I had led at Les Charmettes, and to which the season particularly invited me. This was assisting in the rustic labours of gathering in

vegetables and fruits, in which Thérèse and I made it a pleasure to partake, with the wife of the receiver and his family. I remember that a Bernese, one Monsieur Kirchbergher, coming to see me, found me perched upon a great tree with a sack fastened to my waist, and already so full of apples that I could not stir from the spot. I was not sorry to be caught in this and similar situations. I hoped the people of Berne, witnesses to the employment of my leisure, would no longer think of disturbing my tranquillity, but leave me in peace in my solitude. I should have preferred being confined there by their desire rather than by my own. This would have rendered the continuance of my repose more certain.

This is another declaration upon which I am previously assured of the incredulity of many of my readers who will obstinately judge of me by themselves, although they cannot but have seen, in the course of my life, a thousand internal inclinations which bore no resemblance to any of theirs. But what is still more extraordinary is that, while they refuse me every sentiment, good or indifferent, which they have not, they are constantly ready to attribute to me such evil ones as cannot even enter the heart of man. In this case they find it easy to set me in opposition to nature, and to make of me such a monster as cannot in reality exist. Nothing absurd appears to them incredible, the moment it has a tendency to vilify me, and nothing in the least extraordinary seems to them possible, if it tends to do me honour.

But, notwithstanding what they may think or say, I will still continue faithfully to state what Jean-Jacques Rousseau was, did, and thought, without explaining or justifying the singularity of his sentiments and ideas, or endeavouring to discover whether others have thought as he did. I became so delighted with the Île de Saint-Pierre, and my residence there was so agreeable to me,

that, by concentrating all my desires within it, I formed the wish that I might stay there to the end of my life. The visits I had to return in the neighbourhood, the journeys I should be under the necessity of making to Neufchâtel, Bienne, Yverdun, and Nidau, already fatigued my imagination. A day passed out of the island seemed to me a loss of so much happiness, and to go beyond the bounds of the lake was to go out of my element. Past experience had besides rendered me apprehensive. The very satisfaction that I received from anything was sufficient to make me fear the loss of it, and the ardent desire I felt to end my days in that island was inseparable from the fear of being obliged to leave it. I had a habit of going in the evening to sit upon the sandy shore, especially when the lake was agitated. I felt a singular pleasure in seeing the waves break at my feet. I formed of them in my imagination the image of the tumult of the world contrasted with the peace of my habitation, and this pleasing idea sometimes softened me even to tears. The repose I enjoyed with ecstasy was disturbed only by the inquietude arising from fear of its loss, but this inquietude was accompanied with some bitterness. I felt my situation so precarious that I dared not count upon its continuance. 'Ah! how willingly,' said I to myself, 'would I renounce the liberty of quitting this place, for which I have no desire, for the assurance of always remaining in it! Instead of being permitted to stay here by favour, why am I not detained by force? They who suffer me to remain may in a moment drive me away; and can I hope my persecutors, seeing me happy, will leave me here to continue to be so? Ah! permission to live in the island is but a trifling favour: I could wish to be condemned to it, and constrained to remain here, that I may not be obliged to go elsewhere.' I cast an envious eye upon the happy Micheli Ducret,

who, quiet in the Château d'Arberg, had only to determine to be happy to be so. In fine, through abandoning myself to these reflections, and the alarming apprehensions of new storms always ready to break over my head, I desired with an incredible ardour that, instead of suffering me to reside in the island, the Bernese would give it me for a perpetual prison; and I can affirm that, had it depended upon me to get myself condemned to this, I would most joyfully have done it, preferring a thousand times the necessity of passing my life there to the danger of being expelled thence.

This fear did not long remain a vain one. When I least expected what was to happen, I received a letter from Monsieur le Bailli de Nidau, within whose jurisdiction the Île de Saint-Pierre was. By this letter he announced to me from their Excellencies an order to quit the island and their States. I thought myself in a dream. Nothing could be less natural, reasonable, or foreseen than such an order, for I had considered my apprehensions as the result of inquietude in a man whose imagination was disturbed by his misfortunes, and not to proceed from a prevision which could have the least foundation. The measures I had taken to insure myself the tacit consent of the Sovereign;[1] the tranquillity with which I had been left to make my establishment; the visits of several people from Berne, and that of the bailli himself, who had shown me much friendship and attention; the rigour of the season, in which it was barbarous to expel a man who was sickly and infirm — all these circumstances made me and many people believe that there was some mistake in the order, and that ill-disposed people had purposely chosen the time of the vintage and the vacation of the Senate suddenly to strike this blow.

Had I yielded to the first impulse of my indignation I

[1] That is, the Sovereign Power.

should immediately have departed. But whither was I to go? What was to become of me at the beginning of the winter, without object, preparation, guide, or carriage? If I were not to leave my papers and effects at the mercy of the first comer, time was necessary to make proper arrangements, and it was not stated in the order whether this would be granted me. The continuity of misfortunes began to weigh down my courage. For the first time in my life I felt my natural haughtiness stoop to the yoke of necessity, and, notwithstanding the murmurs of my heart, I was obliged to humble myself by asking for a delay. I applied to Monsieur de Graffenried, who had sent me the order, for an explanation of it. His letter, conceived in the strongest terms of disapprobation of the step that had been taken, assured me that it was with the greatest regret that he communicated to me the nature of it, and the expressions of grief and esteem it contained seemed so many gentle invitations to open to him my heart. I did so. I had no doubt but my letter would make my persecutors conscious of their barbarity, and that, if so cruel an order were not revoked, at least a reasonable delay, perhaps the whole winter, to make the necessary preparations for my retreat, and to choose my place of abode, would be granted me.

Whilst I waited for an answer I set myself to reflect upon my situation, and deliberated upon the steps I had to take. I perceived so many difficulties on all sides, the vexation I had suffered had so strongly affected me, and my health was then in such a bad state, that I was quite overcome, and the effect of my discouragement was to deprive me of the little resource which remained in my mind by which I might make the most of my melancholy situation. In whatever asylum I should take refuge, it appeared impossible to avoid either of the two means made use of to expel me: one of

which was to stir up the populace against me by hidden manœuvres, and the other to drive me away by open force, without giving a reason for so doing. I could not, therefore, depend upon any safe retreat, unless I went in search of it farther than my strength and the season seemed likely to permit. These circumstances again bringing to my recollection the ideas which had lately occurred to me, I dared to ask my persecutors in plain terms to condemn me to perpetual imprisonment rather than oblige me incessantly to wander upon the earth, by successively expelling me from the asylums of which I should make choice. Two days after my first letter to Monsieur de Graffenried I wrote him a second, desiring he would state what I had proposed to their Excellencies. The answer from Berne to both was an order, conceived in the most formal and severe terms, to go out of the island, and leave every territory, mediate and immediate, of the Republic, within the space of twenty-four hours, and never to re-enter, under the most grievous penalties.

This was a terrible moment. I have since that time felt greater anguish, but never have I been more embarrassed. What afflicted me most was being forced to abandon the project which had made me desirous to pass the winter in the island. It is now the time to relate the fatal event which completed my disasters, and involved in my ruin an unfortunate people whose rising virtues already promised to equal in the future those of Rome and Sparta. I had spoken of the Corsicans in *Le Contrat Social* as a new people, the only nation in Europe not too degenerated for legislation, and had expressed the great hope there was for such a people, if they were fortunate enough to have a wise legislator. My work was read by some of the Corsicans, who were sensible of the honourable manner in which I had spoken

of them; and the necessity under which they found themselves of endeavouring to establish their republic made their chiefs think of asking me for my ideas upon this important task. Monsieur Buttafuoco, who belonged to one of the first families in the country, and captain in France in the Royal-Italien Corps, wrote to me to that effect, and sent me several papers for which I had asked to make myself acquainted with the history of the nation and the state of the country. Monsieur Paoli also wrote to me several times; and, although I felt such an undertaking to be superior to my abilities, I thought I could not refuse to give my assistance in so great and noble a work so soon as I should have acquired all the necessary information. It was to this effect that I answered both these gentlemen, and the correspondence lasted till my departure.

Precisely at the same time I heard that France was sending troops to Corsica, and that she had entered into a treaty with the Genoese. This treaty and sending of troops gave me uneasiness, and without imagining that I had any further relation with the business, I thought it impossible, and the attempt ridiculous, to labour at an undertaking which required such an undisturbed tranquillity as the political institution of a people in the moment when perhaps they were upon the point of being subjugated. I did not conceal my fears from Monsieur Buttafuoco, who satisfied me by the assurance that, were there in the treaty things contrary to the liberty of his country, a good citizen like himself would not remain as he did in the service of France. In fact, his zeal for the legislation of the Corsicans, and his close connections with Monsieur Paoli, could not leave a doubt on my mind respecting him; and when I heard that he made frequent journeys to Versailles and Fontainebleau, and had conversations with Monsieur de Choiseul, all I

concluded from the whole was, that with respect to the real intentions of France he had assurances which he gave me to understand, but concerning which he did not choose openly to explain himself by letter.

This removed a part of my apprehensions. Yet, as I could not comprehend the meaning of the transportation of troops from France, nor reasonably suppose that they were sent to Corsica to protect the liberty of the inhabitants, which they of themselves were well able to defend against the Genoese, I could neither make myself perfectly easy nor seriously undertake the plan of the proposed legislation, until I had solid proofs that the whole was not a game in which I was to be made a subject of ridicule. I much wished for an interview with Monsieur Buttafuoco, as that was certainly the best means of coming at the explanation I wished. Of this he gave me hopes, and I waited for it with the greatest impatience. I know not whether he was really sincere in the matter, but, even had this been the case, my misfortunes would have prevented me from profiting by it.

The more I considered the proposed undertaking, and the farther I advanced in the examination of the papers I had in my hands, the greater I found the necessity of studying in the country the people for whom institutions were to be made, the soil they inhabited, and all the relative circumstances by which it was necessary to appropriate to them those institutions. I daily perceived more clearly the impossibility of acquiring at a distance all the information necessary to guide me. This I wrote to Monsieur Buttafuoco, and he felt it as I did. Although I did not decidedly form the resolution of going to Corsica, I considered a good deal of the way to make that voyage. I spoke to Monsieur Dastier, who, having formerly served in the island under Monsieur de Maillebois, was necessarily acquainted with it. He

used every effort to dissuade me from this intention, and I confess that the frightful description he gave me of the Corsicans and their country considerably abated the desire I had of going to live amongst them.

But when the persecutions of Motiers made me think of quitting Switzerland this desire was strengthened by the hope of at length finding amongst these islanders the repose refused me in every other place. One thing only alarmed me, which was my unfitness for the active life to which I was going to be condemned, and the aversion I had always had to it. My disposition, proper for meditating at leisure and in solitude, was not so for speaking and acting and treating of affairs with men. Nature, which had endowed me with the first talent, had refused me the last. Yet I felt that, even without directly taking active part in public affairs, I should, as soon as I was in Corsica, be under the necessity of yielding to the desires of the people, and of frequently conferring with the chiefs. The object even of the voyage required that, instead of seeking retirement, I should in the heart of the country endeavour to gain the information of which I stood in need. It was certain that I should no longer be master of my own time, and that in spite of myself, precipitated into the vortex in which I was not born to move, I should there lead a life contrary to my inclination, and never appear but to disadvantage. I foresaw that, ill supporting by my presence the opinion my books might have given the Corsicans of my capacity, I should lose my reputation amongst them, and, as much to their prejudice as my own, be deprived of the confidence they had in me, without which, however, I could not successfully fulfil the task they expected from me. I was certain that, by thus going out of my sphere, I should become useless to them, and render myself unhappy.

Tormented, beaten by storms from every quarter, and for several years past fatigued by journeys and persecution, I strongly felt a want of the repose of which my barbarous enemies wantonly deprived me. I sighed more than ever after that delicious indolence, that soft tranquillity of body and mind, which I had so much desired, and to which, now that I had recovered from the chimeras of love and friendship, my heart limited its supreme felicity. I viewed with terror the labours I was about to undertake, and the tumultuous life into which I was to enter; and, if the grandeur, beauty, and utility of the object animated my courage, the impossibility of conquering so many difficulties entirely deprived me of it. Twenty years of profound meditation in solitude would have been less painful to me than an active life of six months in the midst of men and public affairs, with a certainty of not succeeding in my undertaking.

I thought of an expedient which seemed proper to obviate every difficulty. Pursued by the underhand dealings of my secret persecutors to every place in which I took refuge, and seeing no other except Corsica where I could in my old days hope for the repose I had until then been everywhere deprived of, I resolved to go there, with the directions of Buttafuoco, as soon as this was possible, but to live there in tranquillity, renouncing, at least openly, everything relative to legislation, and — in some measure to make my hosts a return for their hospitality — to confine myself to writing in the country the history of the Corsicans, with a reserve in my own mind of the intention of secretly acquiring the necessary information to enable me to be more useful to them, should I see a probability of success. In this manner, by not entering into any engagement, I hoped to be enabled to meditate in secret and more at my ease a plan which might be useful to their purpose, and this

without much breaking in upon my dearly-beloved solitude, or submitting to a kind of life which I had ever found insupportable, and to which I could not conform.

But this journey was not in my situation a thing so easy to perform. According to what Monsieur Dastier had told me of Corsica, I could not expect to find there the most simple conveniences of life, except such as I should take with me; linen, clothes, plate, kitchen furniture, paper and books — all had to be conveyed thither. To get there myself with my *gouvernante* I had the Alps to cross, and in a journey of two hundred leagues to drag after me all my baggage. I had also to pass through the States of several Sovereigns, and, according to the example set to all Europe, I had, after what had befallen me, naturally to expect to find obstacles in every quarter, and that each Government would think it did itself honour by overwhelming me with some new insult, and violating in my person all the rights of nations and of humanity. It was necessary, in considering the immense expense, fatigue, and risk of such a probably adventurous journey, to weigh every difficulty beforehand. The idea of being alone and, at my age, without resource, far removed from all my acquaintance, and at the mercy of this barbarous and ferocious people, such as Monsieur Dastier had described them to me, was sufficient to make me think over such a resolution before putting it into execution. I ardently wished for the interview for which Buttafuoco had given me reason to hope, and I waited the result of it to guide me in my determination.

Whilst I thus hesitated came on the persecutions of Motiers, which obliged me to retire. I was not prepared for a long journey, especially to Corsica. I expected to hear from Buttafuoco. I took refuge in the Île de Saint-Pierre, whence I was driven at the beginning of winter,

as I have already stated. The Alps covered with snow then rendered my emigration impracticable, especially with the promptitude required from me. It is true the extravagance of such an order rendered its execution almost impossible, for, in the midst of that concentred solitude, surrounded by water, and having but twenty-four hours after receiving the order to prepare for my departure, and find a boat and carriages to get out of the island and the territory, had I had wings I should scarcely have been able to pay obedience to it. This I wrote to Monsieur le Bailli de Nidau in answer to his letter, and hastened to take my departure from that country of iniquity. Thus was I obliged to abandon my favourite project, for which reason, not having in my oppressed condition been able to prevail upon my persecutors to dispose of me otherwise, I determined, in consequence of the invitation of my Lord Marshal, upon a journey to Berlin, leaving Thérèse to pass the winter in the Île de Saint-Pierre with my books and effects, and depositing my papers in the hands of Du Peyrou. I used so much diligence that the next morning I left the island, and arrived at Bienne before noon. Here I had well-nigh ended my journey, owing to an incident the account of which must not be omitted.

As soon as the news of my having received an order to quit my asylum was circulated I had quite a flood of visitors from the neighbourhood, and especially Bernese, who came with the most detestable falsity to flatter and soothe me, protesting that my persecutors had seized the moment of the vacation of the Senate to obtain and serve me with the order, which, said they, had excited the indignation of the Two Hundred. Among this group of comforters some came from the city of Bienne, a little free State within that of Berne, and amongst others a young man of the name of Wildremet,

whose family was of the first rank, and had the greatest credit in that little city. Wildremet strongly solicited me in the name of his fellow-citizens to choose my retreat amongst them, assuring me that they were anxiously desirous of it, and that they would think it an honour and a duty to make me forget the persecutions I had suffered; that with them I had nothing to fear from the influence of the Bernese; that Bienne was a free city, governed by its own laws; and that the citizens were unanimously resolved not to hearken to any solicitations which should be unfavourable to me.

Wildremet, seeing that I was unshaken, brought to his aid several other persons, as well from Bienne and the environs as from Berne itself, and, amongst others, the same Kirchbergher of whom I have spoken, who had sought me out after my retreat to Switzerland, and by his talents and principles had interested me in his favour. But I received much less expected and more weighty solicitations from Monsieur Barthès, secretary to the embassy from France, who came with Wildremet to see me, exhorted me to accept his invitation, and surprised me by the lively and tender concern he seemed to feel for my situation. I had no knowledge whatever of Monsieur Barthès; however, I perceived in what he said the warmth and zeal of friendship, and that he had it at heart to persuade me to fix my residence at Bienne. He made the most pompous eulogium of the city and its inhabitants, with whom he showed himself so intimately connected as to call them several times in my presence his patrons and fathers.

This behaviour on the part of Barthès bewildered me in my conjectures. I had always suspected Monsieur de Choiseul to be the secret author of all the persecutions that I suffered in Switzerland. The conduct of the French Resident at Geneva, and that of the Ambassador

at Soleure, but too well confirmed these suspicions. I perceived the secret influence of France in everything that happened to me at Berne, Geneva, and Neufchâtel, and I did not think that I had any powerful enemy in France except the Duc de Choiseul.[1] What, therefore, could I think of the visit of Barthès, and the tender interest he appeared to take in my welfare? My misfortunes had not yet destroyed the confidence natural to my heart, and I had still to learn from experience how to discern snares under caresses. I sought with surprise the reason of this benevolence on the part of Barthès. I was not weak enough to believe that he had acted on his own account. There was in his manner something ostentatious, an affectation even which declared a concealed intention; and I was far from having ever found in any of these little subaltern agents that generous intrepidity which, when I was in a similar employment, had often caused a fermentation in my heart.

I had formerly known something of the Chevalier de Beauteville, at the residence of Monsieur de Luxembourg. He had shown me some marks of esteem; since his appointment to the embassy he had given me proofs of his not having entirely forgotten me, accompanied with an invitation to go and see him at Soleure. Though I did not accept this invitation I was extremely sensible of his civility, not having been accustomed to be treated with such kindness by people in office. I presumed that Monsieur de Beauteville, obliged to follow his instructions in whatever related to the affairs of Geneva, yet pitying me under my misfortunes, had by his private influence obtained for me the asylum of Bienne, that I might live there in peace under his auspices. I was

[1] It is noteworthy that Rousseau ascribes the persecutions of which he complains to the Duc de Choiseul alone, without mention of Voltaire, whose name, indeed, does not once occur in this twelfth book.

properly sensible of his attention, but without wishing to profit by it, and, quite determined upon the journey to Berlin, I sighed after the moment in which I was to see my Lord Marshal, persuaded that I should in future find real repose and lasting happiness nowhere but near his person.

On my departure from the island, Kirchbergher accompanied me to Bienne. I there found Wildremet and other Biennese, who, by the waterside, awaited my landing. We all dined together at the inn, and on my arrival there my first care was to provide a chaise, being determined to set off the next morning. Whilst we were at dinner these gentlemen repeated their solicitations to prevail upon me to stay with them, and this with such warmth and obliging protestations that, notwithstanding all my resolutions, my heart, which has never been able to resist cordial attentions, yielded to theirs. The moment they perceived that I was shaken they redoubled their efforts with so much effect that I was at length overcome, and consented to remain at Bienne, at least until the coming spring.

Wildremet immediately set about providing me with a lodging, and boasted, as of a fortunate discovery, of a dirty little chamber in the back of the house, on the third story, overlooking a courtyard, where I was regaled with the display of the stinking skins belonging to a dresser of chamois leather. My host was a little fellow of mean appearance, and a good deal of a rascal, who, as I learned next day, was a debauchee, a gamester, and in ill credit in the neighbourhood. He had neither wife, children, nor servants, and, shut up in my solitary chamber, I was, in the midst of one of the most agreeable countries in Europe, lodged in a manner likely to make me die of melancholy in the course of a few days. What affected me most was that, notwithstanding what I had

heard of the anxious wish of the inhabitants to receive me amongst them, I had not perceived as I passed through the streets anything polite towards me in their manners or obliging in their looks. I was, however, fully determined to remain there; but I learned, saw, and felt the very next day that there was in the city a terrible fermentation, of which I was the cause. Several persons hastened obligingly to inform me that on the next day I was to receive an order, conceived in the most severe terms, immediately to quit the State — that is, the city. I had nobody in whom I could confide. They who had detained me were dispersed. Wildremet had disappeared; I heard no more of Barthès, and it did not appear that his recommendation had brought me into great favour with those whom he had styled his patrons and fathers. One Monsieur de Vau-Travers, a Bernese, who had an agreeable house not far from the city, offered it me for my asylum, hoping, as he said, that I might there avoid being stoned. The advantage this offer held out was not sufficiently flattering to tempt me to prolong my abode with these hospitable people.

Meanwhile, having lost three days by this delay, I had greatly exceeded the twenty-four hours the Bernese had given me to quit their States, and, knowing their severity, I was not without apprehensions as to the manner in which they would suffer me to cross them, when Monsieur le Bailli de Nidau came opportunely and relieved me from my embarrassment. As he had highly disapproved of the violent proceedings of their Excellencies, he thought, in his generosity, that he owed me some public proof of his having taken no part in them, and had courage enough to leave his bailliage to come and pay me a visit at Bienne. He came on the evening before my departure, and, far from coming incognito, he affected ceremony, coming *in fiocchi* in his coach with

his secretary, and brought me a passport in his own name, that I might cross the State of Berne at my ease and without fear of molestation. I was more flattered by the visit than by the passport, and should have been as sensible of the merit of it had it had for object any other person. Nothing makes a greater impression upon my heart than a well-timed act of courage in favour of the weak unjustly oppressed.

At length, after having with difficulty procured a chaise, I next morning left this homicidal country, before the arrival of the deputation with which I was to be honoured, and even before I could see Thérèse, to whom I had written to come to me when I had thought I should remain at Bienne, and whom I had scarcely time to countermand by a short letter informing her of my new disaster. In the third part of my Memoirs, if ever I be able to write them, will be seen in what manner, thinking to set off for Berlin, I really took my departure for England, and the means by which the two ladies who wished to dispose of me, after having by their intrigues driven me from Switzerland, where I was not sufficiently in their power, at last delivered me into the hands of their friend.

I added what follows on reading this manuscript to Monsieur and Madame la Comtesse d'Egmont, Monsieur le Prince Pignatelli, Madame la Marquise de Mesme, and Monsieur le Marquis de Juigné.

I have told the truth: if any person has heard of things contrary to those I have just stated, were they a thousand times proved, he has heard calumny and falsehood, and, if he refuses thoroughly to examine and see what light I can cast on them whilst I am alive, he is not a friend either to justice or truth. For my part, I openly and fearlessly declare that whoever, even without having read my works, shall examine with his own

eyes my disposition, character, manners, inclinations, pleasures, and habits, and pronounce me a dishonest man, is himself one who deserves a gibbet.

Thus I concluded my reading, and every person was silent. Madame d'Egmont was the only person who seemed affected: she trembled visibly, but soon recovered herself, and was silent like the rest of the company. Such were the fruits of this reading and of my declaration.[1]

[1] The above incident occurred in 1770, when the author, on several occasions, read the manuscript of his *Confessions* at gatherings of chosen auditors. These readings were discontinued upon a request for prohibition addressed to the police by Madame d'Epinay, who declared that 'her peace of mind was affected' by the partial publicity thus given to the work. Some years before his death Rousseau wrote a duplicate copy of his life-history, in which he made a few corrections and additions of small importance.

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